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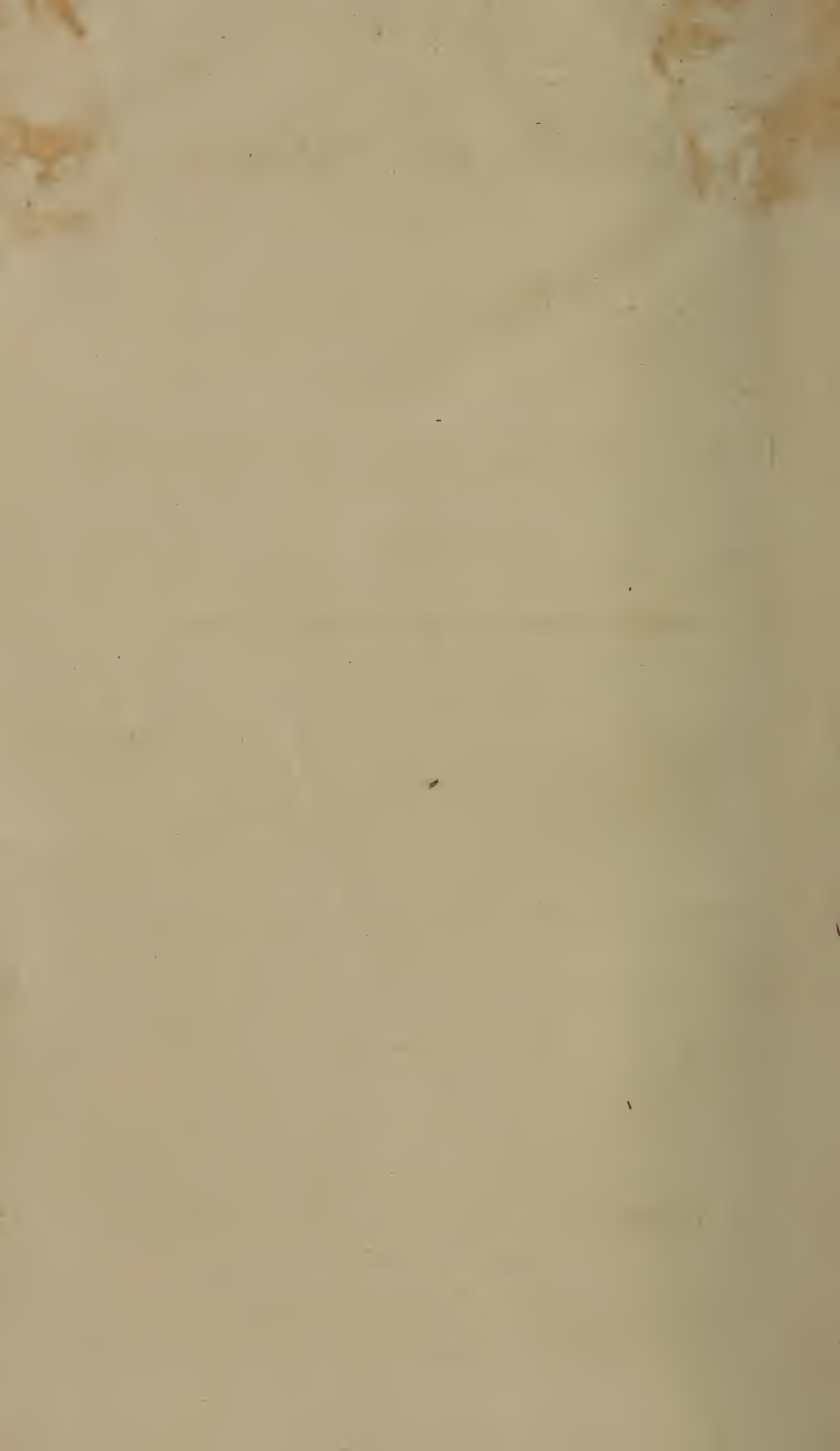
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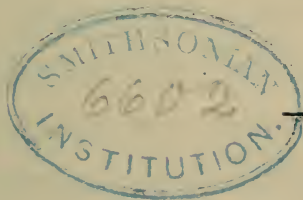




Recollections of a Superannuate:  
OR,  
SKETCHES  
OF  
LIFE, LABOR, AND EXPERIENCE  
IN THE  
METHODIST ITINERANCY.

BY  
REV. DAVID LEWIS,  
OF THE OHIO ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

EDITED BY REV. S. M. MERRILL.



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## P R E F A C E .

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“OF making books there is no end;” and no doubt the publication of works of superior merit on scientific, literary, and religious subjects, is accomplishing much good. But these do not meet the whole demand. Many will be entertained and profited by the perusal of works of humbler pretensions. For this class of persons this volume is designed.

In presenting it to the public, the Author is fully sensible that a mass of prejudice must be encountered. Some regard such publications as unnecessary in this day, when such immense quantities of reading matter are issuing from the teeming press; others think it particularly unbecoming in any one to write his own history. But, being unable to see any impropriety in the course, the Author has yielded to the solicitations

of his friends, who have repeatedly expressed their desire that he should do it, and prepared these "sketches," which he now sends forth, with his sincere prayer to the Father of mercies, that his blessing may attend this last effort of an old man to benefit his fellow-men, and that the little book may be rendered subservient to some useful purpose.

This is a reading age. There is little danger of producing too many books for the demand; but there is some danger that in these *fast* times the prevailing taste will require too many publications of a peculiar kind—light, trashy, corrupting—while solid truths in plain dress will be overlooked. The "rage" is for something new, fresh, racy; the Author does not presume to have produced a work that will meet this fashionable "rage." He has spoken of olden times, of familiar truths, in a plain way. As a writer, he makes no pretensions beyond the mere statement of what he knows. He writes not for the critic, but for the common reader; and those who can not be entertained with the narration of the every-day life of the Methodist preacher, he can not hope to please. He has not aimed at



elaborate polish, or rhetorical ornament; he claims no striking originality or peculiar felicity of style; and sincerely requests all who read these pages to refrain from uncharitable criticism, and to pray that God's blessing may rest upon the truths inculcated, so that the name of the Lord may be glorified.

To all his old friends among whom he has gone preaching the Gospel, the Author would commend the little volume, without any formal "dedication." He has been much profited, and whiled away pleasantly many hours of his "superannuated" life, in writing these "recollections;" and if the reader should be in the least benefited in perusing them, he will be amply rewarded for his toil.

JOHNSTOWN, O., *August*, 1856.





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# RECOLLECTIONS OF A SUPERANNUATE.



## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY LIFE AND EXPERIENCE.

I WAS born in the state of Connecticut, in February, 1783. My parents were both pious members of the Baptist Church, having experienced religion prior to their marriage. From my earliest recollection my father prayed in the family, and craved the Divine blessing upon the food before eating. My mother often conversed with her children in reference to the salvation of their souls, and told them of the blessed Savior—of his condescending love, and of his suffering and death to save a guilty world. My tender mind would often be seriously impressed, but, O, the depravity of the heart! Soon all would be forgotten, and childish sports absorb my thoughts. Sometimes, however, the day of judgment would appear before me in solemn array, and fill me with fear and trembling. Once, when about six or seven years old, while walking toward my father's barn, sudden thoughts of death and judgment flashed upon my mind, filling me with such awful forebodings, that I wished I had never been born. Annihi-

lation seemed desirable to me. Indeed, I did wish it possible to sink into nothing, in order to avoid standing before God; for I knew myself to be a sinner, and felt conscious that I could not be saved in that condition. I now began to form resolutions of amendment, frequently promising myself to do better, but soon lost my good desires. At length I became deeply impressed with the worth of my soul, and determined to be religious, but to allow no one to know it. This was a stratagem of Satan. He suggested that I could have religion and keep it to myself; and, by falling into this delusion, I once more lost my good impressions. I was not outwardly immoral, yet the Spirit often led me to feel that my heart was wicked.

I went on in this way, vowing amendment and breaking vows, till I was about thirteen years of age. That winter I was sent to board with an uncle for the purpose of attending school. On one Sabbath day in February, I attended Church with my uncle and aunt, but thought only of enjoying the sleigh ride, having no concern for the salvation of my soul. The meeting was held in a private house, which was crowded to overflowing. After the preaching was over, I observed a number of people in another room, including the minister, my father—who was deacon in the Church—and many other prominent members; and out of curiosity I crowded in. The room was quite full, the young people standing on the benches next to the wall, all weeping; while near the minister,



a man stood up talking and crying as if nearly overcome with emotion. I looked round upon the young persons who were affected to tears, with a feeling of disdain; and the pride of my heart prompted me to say that I would not stand up there and weep as they were doing for all the world. O, how thoughtless I then was! I knew not what the man was talking about, nor why the people wept. I felt ashamed for them. Afterward I learned that God had converted this man, and several others, and he was now telling what great things had been done for him.

The meeting closed and I went home, still thinking nothing about seeking religion, or trying to serve God. No harassing views of death and judgment then obtruded upon my thoughts. The next morning, with my young heart bounding with merriment, I went home to my father's, and, as usual, went in talking and laughing. My mother spoke kindly to me, and said, "David, what makes you so rude? Zebulon and Polly—my oldest brother and sister—and all the young people are setting out to be Christians, and I am afraid you will be left to go to hell alone." Looking my mother full in the face, I said, "*I would not act so much like salvation!*" This was the first, and, thank God! the last time I ever spoke lightly of religion. My mother sighed and lifted up her heart to God, and with strong faith invoked divine mercy upon her wicked son. I walked to the door and stepped upon the porch,

and just then my mind was suddenly and powerfully impressed with the wickedness of the language used to my mother. Light from heaven flashed into my guilty heart, and discovered to me the wretchedness of my condition as a wicked sinner. I started for the barn, and it seemed that the earth would open to swallow me up. Hell appeared to yawn beneath my feet. The agony of my soul was inexpressible. Overwhelmed with anguish, I fell prostrate upon the earth, and exclaimed, "Whatever others may do, I will plead for mercy!"

My mind was now made up to wait for none of my companions, but to engage at once in the great work of preparing to meet God. I went back to my uncle's a deeply-convicted boy, and for four weeks groaned and prayed for the pardon of my sins. Sometimes it appeared that there was no mercy for me; sleep departed from my eyes, and I found no rest day or night. I attended meeting, but carried my guilt with me and carried it home again. Wherever I went a load of guilt pressed me down. Bearing my hell about in my own bosom, my daily prayer was, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" "Save, Lord, I perish." I thus passed four weeks, lacking one day, in pleading and groaning for mercy and pardon, when, on Sabbath morning,—O! that blessed morning, I shall never forget it—I started to go to my father's, and having gone perhaps halfway, I kneeled by the side of a fence to ask God once more to pardon my sins, and then it appeared to me that

God frowned upon me from above, and that hell was ready to open and receive me. I then thought all was lost, but perceived so clearly the sinfulness of my heart, and the justice of God's law, that I only expressed my true feelings when I said, "Lord, if thou shouldst send me to hell, it is nothing more than I deserve; but while sinking down to the bottomless pit, I will cry for mercy." Just at that moment, I saw the blessed Jesus, by the eye of faith, as clearly as with the natural eye—I saw his smiling countenance, the most glorious ever beheld—and heard him say in my heart, "Young man, be not concerned, thy sins are all forgiven thee!"

Now the gaping hell was closed beneath—heaven, no longer brass, was opened to my vision—love filled my heart, and an indescribable flood of glory overpowered my soul. My guilt was gone; the blood of Jesus washed it all away, and my poor heart was made new. I rose up and gazed upon the old stumps in the field, and they all looked bright and cheerful; the little grove near by, with branches waving in the gentle zephyr, seemed to praise God with delight. My little journey was resumed with a light heart, while my feet seemed scarcely to touch the earth. The earth, air, trees, sky, sunshine—all things, without and within me, spoke of the goodness of my Redeemer. When I arrived at my father's house and went in, the old kitchen looked new; the whole family looked as I had never seen them before—every thing looked new, and I felt new all over.



“Old things were passed away, and, behold, all things were become new.”

But, notwithstanding this delightful experience, it had not yet occurred to me that I was in possession of religion; the idea that my soul was truly regenerated and born of God, had not crossed my mind; but I felt a desire to pray again, and accordingly went into a secret place and fell down upon my knees to say—and never thought of saying any thing else—“God be merciful to me a sinner!” But when I attempted to say these words, ere I was aware of it, I said, “Glory!” I was frightened; something seemed to say to me, “What! such a wretch as you say, Glory?” But another “glory” came, and I felt ten thousand glories in my soul! My next thought was, “What does all this mean?” And then it seemed to me that a voice from heaven said, “This morning, while down yonder crying for mercy, God pardoned your sins.” Then I felt the Spirit of God bearing witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. Then and there I received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father!

Immediately I ran into the house and said, “Father, can you forgive? God has forgiven me, and I’ve found religion!” The manly face of my father lit up with a smile, and with the tear of joy starting from his eye, he said, “David, I have nothing against you! I have ten thousand times more against myself than against you!”

This was about the 20th of March, A. D., 1796.

Soon afterward my untutored mind sought to express the happy experience in verse, and I here present a few of the lines, not for their poetic value, but because of their association with my history at this interesting period of my life:

“And when I rose up from the place,  
I thought I saw my Savior’s face;  
My soul did leap, and shout, and sing,  
And made the heavenly arches ring.  
Then to my friends I soon did go,  
To tell what love I’d found below;  
And there we met with joy and peace,  
And had one glorious Gospel feast.”

That day I accompanied my father to Church, and found it far the happiest day of my life. The old meeting-house and all the people—in a word, the whole world seemed entirely new to me. God had given me a new heart, and every thing around me rejoiced in the smile of heaven. O, how delightful the worship of God! What melody in the hymns of praise! How precious the word of truth! How sweet the fellowship of kindred minds!

A short time after this, perhaps the next Sabbath, after the sermon closed I stood upon the pulpit stairs and talked to the people of the love of Jesus. The house was full, and my heart burned with intense desire to tell the congregation what God had done for my soul, and to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come. While inviting all to come and taste, and see how good the Lord is, my soul was filled with

unutterable happiness; and, though I had never yet heard those beautiful words—

“O, for a thousand tongues to sing  
My great Redeemer’s praise;  
The glories of my God and King,  
The triumphs of his grace,”

they express the feelings of my heart at that time. My heart was deeply moved at the indifference of those who were slumbering in sin. My past life of thoughtlessness and folly now seemed wonderfully mysterious, and my soul was burdened for the conversion of my young acquaintances. I could say, in the language of the poet,

“O, for a trumpet voice,  
On all the world to call—  
To bid their hearts rejoice  
In him who died for all:  
For all, my Lord was crucified;  
For all, for all, my Savior died.”

I shortly united with the Baptist Church. As before stated, my parents were connected with that denomination, and I had no acquaintance with any other. I had heard of the Presbyterians, and of the Church of England, but had not the most distant idea that there were any Christians among them. About all I knew of these denominations was, that they “sprinkled babies.” This was often mentioned by the Baptist members in my hearing—but only in such a way as to inspire in my heart a feeling of disgust toward all that practiced it. Indeed, the force of



circumstances surrounding me, at this time, led me to suppose there was not a Christian in the whole world who was not a Baptist. I have no remark to make upon the propriety of educating children to look upon the different Christian denominations in this light, but only record the fact as an important item in my early experience. We were living at this time in Rensselaer county, New York; my father having moved from Connecticut twelve years previous.

Our minister was not a very popular preacher, though he was a man of strong, cunning mind, possessing the "wisdom of the serpent," if not the "harmlessness of the dove." I continued faithful in the discharge of duty and was very happy most of the time, and still exhorted in the Church nearly every Sabbath. In the township adjoining ours there was a very excellent Baptist preacher, and I would frequently go over to hear him, and sometimes would exhort the people there. One Sabbath I attended his meeting, and at the conclusion of his sermon arose and talked of the love of Christ and hope of heaven. I then saw a little man in the pulpit who, when I ceased talking, kneeled down and prayed with great fervor, and most astonishing fluency. After the benediction was pronounced, this strange little man came down, and, throwing his arm around my neck, whispered in my ear, urging me to be faithful. Some years after this, I learned that the little man was the Rev. Joseph Mitchell, of the New York conference.

Happy would it have been for me, if I had followed his advice! But the pride of my heart began to struggle, and it soon became very difficult to speak in public. The cross became heavy. More self-denial was requisite; I began to seek for ease, and, of course, my enjoyments declined. Sometimes I would take up the cross, and then the Lord blessed me; but sometimes I would shrink from duty and leave the sanctuary, feeling badly. I was subject to strong temptations; indeed, my course was exactly calculated to induce temptations; and while in this condition, I overheard a conversation between some members of the Church which proved injurious to my spiritual comfort. They were speaking of the duty of exhorting in the Church; some of them said they could exhort if they felt well, but if not, they could not succeed if they tried; then one remarked, "Yes, but there is little David Lewis, he can exhort any time." The remark hurt me. I had been thinking, for some time, of giving up the practice, and now the enemy tempted me powerfully; not that the assault was irresistible—we have the promise that no such temptation shall befall us—but I entered into the snare, and made up my mind to exhort no more! The suggestion was thrust upon my mind, "You can be a still Christian as well as others; you can pray in secret and live religion, and be admired." My mind instantly turned to several who never prayed in public, and were highly esteemed as pious, worthy members of the Church. I then said I would never pray or exhort in

public again, but would pray in secret and be a still Christian.

“Ten thousand baits the foe prepares  
To keep the wandering heart,  
And seldom do we see the snares  
Before we feel the smart.”

So it was with me; for the first time I went into secret to pray, after forming this resolution, but I found my relish for prayer was gone; my access to the throne of mercy was hindered—darkness supervened, joy fled, and prayer became an irksome task. I still intended to live a Christian life, but found so little enjoyment, that the closet was almost entirely neglected. Gradually I sunk into a lifeless state, retaining the outward form of godliness, but destitute of its power. But while in this condition, every day and almost every hour, something seemed to be saying to me, “You are doing wrong.” My own heart condemned me and kept me constantly in heaviness; and I felt truly that God was greater than my heart, and knew all things. I always intended, and frequently purposed to come back to God; and I remember once to have gone out to pray, and fell upon my knees, but dared not open my mouth before the Lord. So greatly had I sinned that my mouth was stopped, my tongue refused to utter the anguish of my mind in the presence of the Holy One!

But I was never so far backslidden as to lose respect for the house and service of God; his fear was yet, in a measure, before my eyes all the day, and it



gave me pleasure to hear of the prosperity of Zion. Even while under the cloud, while destitute of vital communion with Christ in my own heart, nothing would give me more pleasure than to hear of a revival of religion. The report of the outpouring of the divine Spirit would induce me to *feel*—

“O that I were as heretofore,  
When, warm in my first love,  
I only lived my God t’ adore,  
And seek the things above.

Upon my head his candle shone,  
And lavish of his grace,  
With cords of love he drew me on,  
And half unvail’d his face.

Far, far above all earthly things  
Triumphantly I rode ;  
I soar’d to heav’n on eagles’ wings,  
And found and talk’d with God.

Where am I now ? From what a hight  
Of happiness cast down !  
The glory swallow’d up in night,  
And faded is the crown.”

Yes, reader, “the glory was swallowed up in night?” All was gloom and darkness. I knew there was a reality in religion, for I had felt its power. On eagles’ wings my new-born soul had soared to heaven, and found and talked with God ! His candle shone upon my head, his love drew me as with cords in the way of duty ; far above the glittering things of earth my spirit rode in triumph ! But from this hight of enjoyment, I came down to seek pleasure in the world. Vain effort ! The world, all beautiful



and bright, with its charming melody and fragrant flowers, so full of goodness, and teeming with the rich blessings of heaven, can afford no pleasure to a soul deprived of the favor of God. O, the bitterness of backsliding! Father of everlasting grace, pity all who feel it! Dear reader, beware of the neglect of duty. You can not enjoy religion without watching unto prayer. In order to maintain the life of godliness, you must keep the great end of life in view, feel that you are not your own, live not to self, but to Christ. Regularly retire into some secret place and pour out your soul in prayer. If you feel but little, go the oftener; press your suit before the throne, remembering that Christ enjoins importunity; and let no day pass without a new consecration to God. If you thus live—if you make it your delight to commune with heaven, you shall prove the deep meaning of St. Paul's words, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." You will then answer the end of your creation, glorify God in your body and spirit, which are his, live and die happy, and possess the kingdom with the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

But to return. I continued to wander in this backslidden state for several years—all the time an acceptable member of the Church, and looked upon by others as a good Christian—yet feeling conscious that

my soul was barren and desolate, having long since ceased to bring forth the fragrant fruits of the Spirit. But I was approaching a new epoch—a turning point in my history, to which I look back with peculiar interest. I went down, one Sabbath day, to hear the minister in the adjoining township, to whom I have referred, and, in company with two young men of my acquaintance, started toward home. But, instead of going directly home, being full of glee, we rode on till we came to Milltown, rode up into the place, and, seeing a crowd collected about the house of ———, we were soon in their midst, and found that there was some one preaching in the house. I stood near an open window, and soon found myself deeply interested in the discourse. The preacher was dwelling on the atonement of Christ, its fullness and freeness, and the agency of man in availing himself of its rich provisions. The subject fixed my attention, and I listened to every word with the greatest eagerness, not doubting that the stranger was a true ambassador of Jesus Christ. I believed every word he uttered, though brought up to believe in a limited atonement—or, at least, in a Church that taught the doctrine of a limited atonement, and denied the agency of man in the attainment of salvation. In a word, I had been taught the doctrines of unconditional election and reprobation, but could never believe them. I had even held some little disputes on these points; but my mind was beclouded. I stood in need of light; for it was plain to me that there was something

unsound in the teachings of the Church in relation to these doctrines, but I could not sufficiently comprehend the subject to tell precisely where the difficulty was. But in this reverend gentleman's discourse, the Gospel method of salvation by grace through faith, was opened to my mind and made so plain that I wondered every one did not embrace it. His remarks were Scriptural, lucid, and convincing. As I listened, a thrill of pleasure ran through my heart. I was instructed, amazed, captivated. The divine simplicity of this truly-evangelical sermon charmed my soul. The preacher was Rev. Joseph Mitchell, the little man once before referred to, who put his arm around my neck, and urged me to be faithful!

This was the first Methodist sermon I ever heard. At the close of the discourse, some of the people came out, and, forgetting my companions, I crowded in. The preacher stepped up on a bench and commenced singing that beautiful hymn, "Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone." I stepped up by his side so as to look into his book; for I had never heard the words before, and we sung the hymn through. He then whispered in my ear the question, "Do you enjoy religion?" My answer was according to the times, "*I hope so!*"

Rev. Mr. Mitchell then said, "I am now going to prophesy: God is about to revive his work here—we shall soon have a reformation in this place. Now, if you have any old backslidden Baptists in this region, they will be the first to oppose the work." He left



another appointment, came round in four weeks, and God did revive his work; sinners were awakened and converted to God. I attended the meetings, and felt the hardness of my heart giving way; I began to sigh and groan for my forfeited peace; my hidden sorrow burst forth in gushing tears. Then could I say—

“O God, thou art my home, my rest,  
For which I sigh in pain;  
How shall I ’scape into thy breast?  
My Eden how regain?”

Thank God! I did not sigh in vain. I now discovered all the follies of my backslidden life, felt deeply sensible of my ingratitude, promised the Lord in humility to perform every known duty, pleaded earnestly the prayer of the humbled Psalmist, “Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, uphold me with thy free Spirit,” and, adding the Psalmist’s vow, “Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee,” I fully consecrated myself to his service, feeling that, living or dying, I would be the Lord’s. Thank Heaven! like the first approach of morning, light began to dawn upon my soul, and it continued to shine more and more till every cloud was dispelled, and the full beams of the sun of righteousness poured down upon my heart—scattering darkness, doubt, fear, and sorrow, and filling my mind with the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

There were other preachers on that circuit with whom I was much pleased. Their prayers and exhortations interested me very much; and I thought if

their lives only corresponded with their profession, all would be right. But, alas! it was reported that they were "black-legs;" and every thing that was bad was said about them. I was often led to ask myself the question, Can it be possible that men guilty of such wickedness as is charged upon these, can pray as they do? O, thou tongue of slander, what evil hast thou wrought! What contempt hast thou poured upon the cause of God! What deep injury hast thou inflicted on the servants of Christ! Truly thou art a deadly poison! Thou art a fire, a world of iniquity! Thou settest on fire the course of nature, and art set on fire of hell!

"The dark villain who shall aim  
To blast a fair and spotless name;  
He steals a precious gem away—  
Steals what both Indies can't repay."

I knew nothing at this time of the economy of the Methodist Episcopal Church. I knew nothing of the conference, of the annual examinations of character, of the manner of sending preachers to their fields of labor; and, hence, however difficult it was to suppose men capable of acting a feigned part in such a manner, and for such a length of time, some doubts did spring up in my mind respecting these men of God. But still I attended upon their ministry, and my father would sometimes go; he said they were *smart* men, but did not preach the Gospel. He became much offended at their preaching, but would not desist from hearing them. We would sometimes talk

together about the subject matter of their preaching; he violently opposed it, but I defended it as well as I knew how, with much zeal; for, though no thought of joining the Methodist Church had yet entered my mind, I dearly loved the doctrines these men preached, and fully believed them to be the doctrines of the Bible.

My oldest sister experienced religion about the time of my own conversion, and, like myself, subsequently lost her enjoyments; but now, by attending these Methodist meetings, she was renewed in the divine life and made happy. Being but nine years of age when first converted, she was yet under parental control, and being desirous to join the Methodist Church, she asked her father's consent. He peremptorily denied her the privilege! After she went out, I interceded in her behalf, but he would not consent. I asked which he would prefer—that she should join the Methodists, and live a religious life, or remain where she was and lose her religion? He said there was no need of losing her religion. I insisted that she would surely backslide, if she did not join the Methodist Church; and so she did; but, after she was of age, she was again renewed—she then immediately joined the Church of her choice, and lived and died a flaming Christian.

“Glory to God on high! the Christian dies!  
Dies from the world, and quits the earthly clod;  
Dies, and receives the crown by Christ bestow'd;  
Dies into all the life and plenitude of God.”



## CHAPTER II.

## JOIN THE METHODISTS—COMMENCE PREACHING.

I CONTINUED to attend the Methodist meetings, and was more and more pleased with them. There I found congenial spirits—Christians baptized with the Spirit of love, whose warm hearts, and generous impulses overstepped the narrow limits of sectarian distinctions, and embraced with brotherly affection, all true disciples of the risen Lord. Embracing a Gospel that offered eternal life to all men on equal terms, proclaiming as a fundamental truth that God is no respecter of persons, delighting in the belief that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, and aiming at nothing less than the subjugation of the world to the reign of Messiah, they evinced a nobler charity and a purer zeal than any people I had ever known. Their simplicity of manner, fervor in prayer, and love for the souls of sinners for whom the Savior died, rendered their associations agreeable to me, and tended greatly to allay my fears in reference to those who preached for them the word of life, and on whose reputation the poisonous breath of slander had fallen.

But our minister was violently opposed to the Methodists—their success gave him much uneasiness,

and he hurled upon them unmeasured denunciation. He frequently gave out that, on such and such Sabbaths, he would expose their doctrines, and these announcements were understood as intimations that his "big gun" was to be fired off. But it would prove to be charged with invective and calumny. The explosion would be great enough; but, like all over-charged artillery, the most fearful execution was produced at home. In other words, his vituperation rebounded, and fell with crushing weight upon his own head. In his over-zealous efforts to counteract Methodism, he sunk himself in the estimation of the better part of community, and saw his own Church dwindle away and fall to rise no more in that place. This is the inevitable result of blindly fighting the truth. But the Methodists increased in numbers and influence, bought a lot, built a house of worship, and continued to prosper in spite of the detractions of their enemies.

On the third day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1802, I was united in the holy bonds of matrimony with Miss DESIRE STEWARD—my present wife, who from that time to this has been my companion in labor, and sharer of my joys and sorrows. With the ambition of young, hopeful hearts, we set out in life with fair prospects and high expectations. Possessing good health and willing hands, we anticipated the acquisition of a "competency" of this world's good, not doubting that, with the blessing of Heaven, we should spend our days in comparative quiet, with-

out witnessing much of the bustle and turmoil of the world in its heated strife. How little did we know of the ways of Providence!

I entered into business, but did not succeed well. And no wonder that Heaven frowned, for I rented a tavern stand, opened public house, set up a "bar" and sold rum! This was then regarded an honorable business, and professors of Christianity would pour out the "liquid fire" for gain, as freely as they would perform any other labor. But, thank God! light has been poured upon the accursed traffic, revealing in hideous colors the monstrous iniquity attending it, so that it is now expunged from the list of pursuits in which Christians can engage. While thus employed, I lost my enjoyments in religion, and lost several hundred dollars in money; I closed the business in the year 1806.

During that same year we moved to Plattsburg, bought land, and went to work in the woods. In a short time I cleared off a spot of ground, built a house, and moved into it. Now we felt happy to find ourselves settled on a little farm of our own, though it was in a rude state, the settlement being new. Our neighbors were very kind, as is generally the case in a newly-settled country, but they were not religious. I still frequented Methodist meetings, but had no thought of uniting with the Church. Why, I can scarcely tell; for I believed their doctrines, and had enjoyed myself better in their meetings than anywhere else; but the power of early education, preju-



dice and association, is very great. Being reared in the very lap of the Baptist Church, I had not yet deliberately looked upon my Church relations as an open question, admitting of choice or preference. I delighted, however, to converse with pious Methodists, especially in reference to camp meetings. Their reports of the displays of divine power witnessed by them on these occasions, excited me with emotions of peculiar interest—they struck my mind as in perfect accordance with the Scriptures.

After spending some months in this place, the subject of my Church connection was suddenly brought to my view in a different light from what it had ever been before. While chopping in the woods, meditating on the goodness of God, and the privileges of Christian fellowship, the question rushed upon my mind, as if uttered by a voice, "Of all branches of the Church, which do you think the most Scriptural?" My mind responded as if by spontaneous impulse, "The Methodist." Following this in rapid succession, the following questions and answers sprang up in my mind: "With what people do you best enjoy yourself?" "The Methodists." "Why then do you not join them?" "Because my relations are all opposed to them—the world despises them, the devil hates them, and the pride of my heart keeps me back." "Did you not promise God that if he would heal your backslidings, you would perform every known duty?" "I did." "Well, now God has shown you that it is your duty to join the Methodist



Church, has he not?" "Truth, Lord, and if my life is spared, I will join that Church to-morrow!"

I threw down the ax, went to the house, and told my wife that I was going to Peru the next day—this being Saturday—to join the Methodists. She expressed much surprise, and remonstrated strongly against it; said she would rather follow me to my grave, etc.; but I was decided in my course. She then tried another method: "*I would*," said she, "join the Church with old T. and J!" These were two poor men in the Church; T. was an excellent, pious man; but J. was not what he should have been. My wife was not only affectionate, but pious; and yet her prejudices betrayed her into these remarks, so unlike herself. And this may be taken as a fair illustration of the feelings which other denominations entertained toward the Methodists. They felt disgraced if their friends joined them. I then told my wife that she could have her liberty in relation to the matter, and I would take mine; that she could have a horse and go to her meetings whenever she wished; that if she would go with me to meeting, I would wait on her as I had ever done; but if she preferred going to her own, we would go together as far as the road would permit, and if we could fall in company on our way home, I would be pleased to assist her as formerly; but to decline joining the Methodists, I could not. It was my duty to join them several years ago, but my friends were opposed to them, and the pride of my heart had hindered me, etc. We

both wept, but nothing could move me from my purpose. I did go the next day, and made application to be received into the Church, and, thank God! with all my unworthiness, they accepted me and received me cordially to their Christian fellowship. This occurred on the 13th day of June, A.D. 1807; and in October following, my wife joined with me, and from that time we went on hand in hand praising God.

Our place of meeting was six miles distant, but I was absent only two Sabbaths in twelve months—beside attending prayer meeting nearly every Wednesday. These were blessed days to my soul! God was with us in very deed. As before remarked, our neighbors were unusually kind, but cared nothing for religion. When they heard I had joined the Methodists, they said they were astonished that I should be so deluded. They were ignorant of Methodism, and unacquainted with Methodist people; they had heard something about them, but nothing good. A scene of persecution ensued—manifested principally in petty annoyances. In those days the Methodists held meeting every holiday—would that it were so now—and, of course, myself and family were there. One of my neighbors sent to my house on Christmas day for a pair of bullet molds, and was highly offended because we were not at home. On New-Year's day he sent again, as he wanted to go to a shooting-match—but found the house locked. He was now more angry than before,

and said he "wished to God the house was burned down, and Lewis burned up in it." He said we were eternally gone to meeting, and would come to nothing.

And just here permit me to record a remarkable instance of prayer answered. On Sabbath night I prayed earnestly for this neighbor, Mr. S——, and asked God to convict him so that he could neither eat, sleep, nor work, till he sought religion. On Monday, I made the same request—several times during the day retiring into the grove, and pleading with God to send his Holy Spirit and awaken Mr. S—— to a sense of his sins, and trouble his conscience so that he could neither eat, sleep, nor work. On Tuesday Mr. S—— came to where I was, and said that he had been up to his father-in-law's to do some work, but felt so badly that he could not get through with it. He told his father-in-law the state of his mind, and the old gentleman replied that *he* had been under conviction for six months. "But," said Mr. S——, "I know I can not live in this state six weeks; why, I can neither eat, sleep, nor work!" I said to him, "Mr. S——, your father-in-law might have been under conviction six months, but not such as yours—you are on the margin of conversion; and if you will go with me into the grove, we will engage in prayer, and God will pardon your sins." "O," said he, "Mr. Lewis, it can't be possible that so much filth can be purged away in so short time!" "Come with me and I will pray for you," said I,



“and God will have mercy on your soul.” We walked together into the grove, and he kneeled down with me. This encouraged me much, for I had heard it remarked as an old saying, that if you could get a Yankee on his knees he was half converted. I commenced praying, and Mr. S—— manifested deep feeling. I continued to plead with God in his behalf, and he groaned and sobbed. His heart was now broken up, and he poured forth, in the language of confession and contrition, most bitter lamentations for past follies, with earnest supplications for mercy and pardon in the name of the precious Redeemer, whom he had so often slighted. And, O, the riches of mercy! God heard his penitent desire, pardoned his sins, sent down the Holy Spirit, and filled him with happiness, and he went home rejoicing in hope of eternal life.

I now prevailed on the preacher to make an appointment at my house. He came and preached for us, then came again and preached in Mr. S——’s barn, and soon formed a class, giving me the class-book. The good work went on gloriously, so that in a short period we had a good society of forty members. This society was formed in the summer of 1808.

About this time, my mind was greatly exercised in relation to preaching the Gospel. Indeed, the thought that I must preach had pressed upon my mind for a long time, but there appeared so many hinderances in the way, that I had not laid the



matter seriously to heart. Now, however, the subject became one of moving interest—so much so that it could not be put off without careful attention, and conscientious decision. I felt that my spiritual enjoyments, my usefulness, and my temporal prospects were involved in the question, to say nothing of my eternal interests. Prayerfully did I revolve the question, “What shall I do?” To refuse positively, I dare not; and to undertake the great work seemed impossible. An overwhelming sense of my want of qualification for so important a calling, filled me with fear and trembling. Having been reared in a new country, where school advantages were scarce, my education was defective, and my stock of general knowledge necessarily limited. My embarrassment was great. My brethren would often pray that God would thrust me out to do my duty, yet I felt conscious that I knew not how to preach. Moreover, I felt that if I preached at all, I must make a business of it, enter the itinerancy and devote my life to the work; and the thought of subjecting an affectionate wife and dear children to the privations and hardships incident to the circumstances of the family of a Methodist traveling preacher, was to me very painful. I knew not how to go, and to stay at the hazard of disobeying God, I felt that I could not. But, after many severe mental conflicts, my mind was made up that if the Church would give me license, I would go out into the wide world and call sinners to repentance. In the month of March, 1809, the preacher—

Rev. Samuel Draper, of the New York conference, the brother who took me into the Church—left the circuit; and having previously licensed me to exhort, gave me liberty to preach, and employed me to fill the appointments on the circuit, till the preachers should arrive from conference. The door was now fairly open, and, in the name and strength of God, I started out to commence the work which, in the providence of God, was to “make my heart rejoice, and spend the remnant of my days.” I completed my engagement; and, when conference was over, there proved to be a vacancy on the Fletcher circuit, on the eastern side of Lake Champlain, which the presiding elder employed me to fill till the first quarterly meeting, at which time the brother appointed from conference would arrive. I attended quarterly meeting on Saturday, and received a regular license to preach, and on Monday, started for the circuit.

My trials of mind at this time were very great. The mingled emotions to which the circumstances surrounding me gave rise, kept me in continual agitation. But while crossing the Lake, I strove to give myself up entirely to God and his work. My sincere prayer to God was, that he would make me useful. I lifted my heart to him, and promised that if he would raise up one soul to testify that my labors had been instrumental in his or her conversion, I would travel all the year, provided there should be an opening. I arrived upon the circuit,

and found my colleague, Rev. O. Sikes, a deeply pious man and good preacher. He furnished me with a list of the appointments. My first one was at the house of Deacon Thurston, on the river Samile, in Vermont. Sabbath came, and, after preaching as well as I could, it was suggested to me that a thousand such sermons would be of no benefit to any one. Mortified and humbled, I would gladly have hidden myself, if it had been possible; but the class must be met. Without this, our work was never considered done in those days. I proceeded to the afternoon appointment with my mind under a cloud, thinking of the disgrace brought upon myself and the cause of religion. I prayed and wept; and, on coming round in two weeks, found an old lady happy in God, saying that, under that sermon, she was awakened, and had found peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ! This encouraged my poor heart, and brought to remembrance the pledge made to God, that if he would raise up one soul to testify that my labors were instrumental in his or her conversion, I would travel the whole year, if there should be an opening. I felt that God's seal was now placed upon my humble efforts, and desired to follow the leadings of his providence, to whatever labor or sacrifice he might call me.

At the first quarterly meeting the preacher came on, as was expected. We had a glorious meeting, resulting in several conversions. The presiding elder then took me with him into Lower Canada, to travel



with brother Whiting on Dunham circuit, for the purpose of turning it into a four weeks' circuit. Here I found the country new, the people poor, and fearfully wicked. I preached in townships that had been settled seven and nine years, and never a sermon in them till that fall. The people were very shy of us—so much so, that we found some difficulty in holding conversations with them respecting their souls. I went into the township of Stukely to Mr. L——'s. He wanted preaching at his house, but his wife was violently opposed to it. She said she would not harbor the lazy Methodist preachers, who were going about the country getting money and picking people's pockets. I staid all night, however, and conversed with Mr. L—— in reference to the salvation of his soul—his wife retiring early, determined not to harbor Methodist preachers. The next morning—Sabbath—the people came in, and I preached to them from 2 Corinthians v, 17: "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." But Mrs. L—— shut herself up in another room, determined not to hear. We had an intermission, and then preaching again. In the afternoon, I traveled through the woods some distance, and at night preached from, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Here the family had no religion, but desired to have preaching. They treated me with so much kindness that I felt quite at home with them.

Thus I passed once around the circuit, a stranger in a strange land; but God was with me, the strength



of my heart, a very present help in trouble; and his strong arm sustained me.

I was now in the British dominions, and often sat and heard many hard things said against the Government of the United States—the Government of my own beloved, my native land. This was a source of great pain to me, but the only alternative was to submit and bear it. If I should utter a word of objection against their form of government, they would immediately say, “You must not talk so here; we are bound to inform against you.”

On my second round, the aspect of things was more pleasing. I now found some to bid me welcome to their houses with smiling faces. Soon God gave me the hearts of the people, and even Mrs. L——, who would not hear me preach on the first round, was converted, joined the Church, and became an honored mother in our Israel. Her house became one of the best homes for the toiling itinerant that could be found in the country. But while in this province, I suffered extremely from the cold. I would often sleep in open cabins where the snow would cover the bed, and with too light clothing for the season; sometimes in an open loft where the wind had full sweep. On the older part of the circuit, however, I found better accommodations; for I found some old, well-tried Methodists, faithfully serving God night and day. Among these, I may name the Bigelow family—parents of the lamented Russell Bigelow—a most excellent family, and a blessed home for the weary

herald of the cross. Here were grandmother, father, mother, two sons, and three or four daughters, all pious. We would hold family prayer meeting every time I came to stop with them, and I always obtained an increase of strength. Here also was a family of the name of Anderson, whose house was open for the preacher. One daughter belonged to the Church. She would always hold family worship when the preacher was not present. I met with her a few years ago, living in Springfield, Ohio. She was a widow, still holding fast her profession—took great pleasure in talking over olden times, and relating the dealings of God with her.

During this year, I lost my horse; then walked and preached two and three times a day, for two weeks. Previous to this, I had never but once walked the distance of seven miles at one time. I bought another horse, for which I paid all the money I had, gave up my watch, gave my note for the balance, and hired five dollars to bear my expenses home. We had no missionary societies in those days.

I remember, while on this circuit, preaching at a brother's house, where I had but little feeling; my mind was beclouded, and religious enjoyments fled. I had another appointment at night, where a lady belonged whose husband was greatly opposed to us, and would not allow her to attend the meetings. Several of the friends started with me to this appointment, but I should have preferred being alone. My mind was much beclouded. I tried to think of

some subject on which to dwell, but all was as dark as midnight. I could think of nothing to say—the Bible was a sealed book to me, and my mind was depressed with grief. I reviewed my past life, looked into my heart, felt anxious to know the cause of this distressing darkness, but could detect no neglect of known duty, nor did I realize any condemnation. In this state of feeling I arrived at the house where the appointment was, retired to a private room, fell upon my knees in prayer, and pleaded with God for light—but all was darkness before me. I continued to wrestle, groan, and struggle in supplication before the Lord, till the congregation assembled. The people were now waiting; the agony of my soul was inexpressible; but I determined not to rise from my knees till God should bless me. At length faith prevailed, and, suddenly as the spark from smitten steel, light flashed into my heart! It seemed as though a ball of celestial fire burst upon my head, and ran through my soul! “This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them,” rushed into my mind. I rose up, entered the room to the presence of the people, and said, “God will let down his power in the congregation!” That wicked man, who hindered his wife from attending her meetings, happened to be present, and as I uttered these words, the power of God struck his heart. I preached with great freedom, and, after preaching, we labored with this poor, convicted sinner, till God, for Christ’s sake, pardoned all his sins. We had a shout in the camp. “O come, let us sing unto the



Lord: let us make a joyful noise unto the Rock of our salvation.”

I closed my first year of itinerant labor, having received toward supporting myself and family, consisting of my wife and three children, the sum of thirty-six dollars, quarterage, and about seventeen dollars given by friends toward making up the loss of my horse. These were times that tried men’s souls and bodies too.

I returned to the bosom of my family, thankful to God that our lives were preserved, and spent some time visiting old friends, and preaching to them the Gospel of peace. And here let me give glory to God for the good that was done through the instrumentality of my feeble labors. I saw a large number of souls happily converted to God, and took many into the Church. Doubtless, ere this, some of them are singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, high up in glory. Lord, keep me faithful till death releases me from earth, that I may meet them in the glorious world above!

“There is a land where grief can never come,  
Nor sorrows press the heavy-laden heart;  
There friends shall meet in an eternal home,  
And from each other never more shall part.”



## CHAPTER III.

## FLETCHER CIRCUIT—UNDER THE ELDER.

At the session of the New York conference for the year 1810, there was a vacancy left for me on the Fletcher circuit, where I traveled under the direction of the presiding elder. This was the circuit on which I labored prior to the first quarterly meeting of the previous year. My first acquaintance there, though short, was very happy. I was much pleased with the people, and they gave me a hearty welcome to their circuit. My colleague this year was Rev. Francis Brown—a worthy little brother, faithful and well received. We labored together in great harmony, and were permitted to see the work of the Lord gloriously revive—sinners were pricked in their hearts, cried for mercy, and found redemption in the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace.

Methodism had now gained a pretty strong hold on the affections of the people, but all opposition was not yet broken down in that quarter. In common with all true disciples of Christ, we had to contend with the world, the flesh, and the devil, and, in addition, with some who professed to be Christians. In

other denominations, among ministers and members, were many found to cry out against us. I am sorry to record this fact. The recollection of it is painful to my heart. But my old Baptist and Presbyterian friends know that what I affirm of the state of things, forty and fifty years ago, is strictly and literally true. But, thank God! I have lived to see the day when those who were most violently opposed to us, give us the right hand of fellowship. Say not that the former days were better than these. Thank Heaven! light is increasing, darkness recedes, the power of bigotry is broken, truth prevails, error falls to the ground, and let all the people say, *Amen*.

My family lived in Peru, on the west side of Lake Champlain, and my circuit was on the eastern side; of course, I was absent from my family most of the time. The circuit was large, containing from twenty-five to thirty appointments to be filled every four weeks. Generally, I could spend one or two days with my family in two months. My whole time was given up to God and his cause. We met with opposition wherever we went, but God laid to his helping hand, and added to our numbers daily, so that the despised Methodists were happy and prosperous, walking in the light of the Lord.

At Waterbury, the society had been for some time in a cold state; but the set time to favor Zion at this place was come. I went to brother Jones's, where the preaching was held, and spent a happy night with the family. The next morning, Sabbath, the people

collected as usual, and I opened the service with singing and prayer, then read the text—Isaiah xl, 9–11—and proceeded to expound it as well as I was able; and while I yet spoke, “the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.” God revealed himself in great power—sinners were cut to the heart and cried for mercy. The membership awoke and prayed to God mightily, and the glory of the Lord filled the whole house where we were assembled. About twenty were awakened and cried for mercy, and, God be praised! they did not cry in vain. God heard our prayers, poured out his Spirit, and shed his love abroad in penitent, broken hearts. I remained and labored with the seekers as long as duty would permit, and then went on to my afternoon appointment, filled with faith and the Holy Ghost. There were, perhaps, more souls awakened here than under any one sermon I ever preached. Once, while preaching in S——, in a barn—the men sitting on one side and the women on the other—the power of God came down like the rushing of a mighty wind, and the people fell like men slain in battle. Nearly half the congregation were on the floor crying for mercy, or shouting the high praises of God.

But notwithstanding these evidences of God’s blessing upon my labors, I was often tempted to think he had never called me to this work. I often wished that no one had heard me say I thought it my duty to preach, and thought if I were to begin again, I would



keep it to myself. But now I was committed, and the Church had called me out, and I knew not how to draw back. I frequently prayed to God, that if he had called me to preach, he would send down his sin-slaying power in the congregation; and I seldom asked for such witness, but, before my sermon ended, one, and sometimes a dozen persons would fall to the floor. Still, when I looked into the Bible, and saw the depth of divine truth, its precious pearls lying so far beyond my reach, the contemplation so impressed my mind with a sense of my unfitness for the work of the ministry, that I did look upon myself as one having run before he was sent. I seemed like a man standing upon the earth, looking down into the deep mines of gold, viewing the precious metal far beneath his grasp, while he was only permitted to pick up some bits here and there which lay near the surface.

And, my brethren, it is not a light thing to be a minister of the Gospel. When we think of standing between God and the souls of men dead in trespasses and sins, to teach them to escape hell and gain heaven—when we think of being made a mouth-piece for God, and of the account we must give to him in the great day, as to how and what we have preached—and when we remember that our preaching will be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, we may well exclaim with St. Paul, “Who is sufficient for these things!” Verily, “our sufficiency is of God;” who hath said, “My grace is sufficient for



thee." Thank God! after forty-seven years' experience in the blessed work, I am now happy, and would that all the world might come and see how good the Lord is. Salvation to God and the Lamb!

This year we took in a new appointment, in the town of Jericho, a gentleman living near having opened his house for our entertainment. I spent many happy nights with this man and his old lady. They had never experienced religion, but were pleased to have us preach in the neighborhood. As we held forth the word of life in this place, some mocked, but others listened with attention; for our doctrine was entirely new to them. The people had been taught, in lieu of the Gospel, that God foreordained whatsoever comes to pass—that he had, from all eternity, elected a certain and definite number to eternal life, and foreordained the rest to eternal death—that the number of each class was particularly and unchangeably designed, and so certain and definite that it could not be increased or diminished. One day, at the close of preaching here, a man rose up in the congregation and said, "God has his elect, and he gave his Son to die for them, and for them only; and St. Paul says, 'If I or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed.'" I replied, "Paul says, 'Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life;' and, 'We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels

for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man;' and, again, in speaking of Christ, he says, that 'he gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.' And now, sir, the due time has come, and I am sent to testify this glorious truth to all men, and *you* are found preaching 'another Gospel,' and upon *you* the curse must fall."

When I came round to this point again, a friend told me that he had asked a Mr. S. W—— why he did not come out to hear me preach. His reply was, "The Methodists are not fit to preach—they are a poor, ignorant set, not fit to preach in any polite place; but if they can get a lot of ignorant old women together, in some corner of the town, they will do to preach to them. I would like to see your Mr. Lewis." After preaching, notice was given that there would be a prayer meeting at the house of Mr. W——, father to the S. W—— above mentioned, that evening. Mr. W—— sent word to his son that there would be a conference meeting at his house that night—that the Methodist preacher was to be there, and he—the father—would like to have him—the son—attend. I opened the meeting, and in some introductory remarks, took occasion to notice two extremes into which men sometimes fall; namely, Pharisaism and Antinomianism. Said I, "The Pharisee will tell us he is going to heaven by his works, and the Antinomian rushes to the opposite extreme,

discarding works altogether, and claims salvation by faith alone; but St. James sets both right when he says, 'Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.' Faith and works must go together. Our faith must be 'of the operation of God, producing good works.'" After the meeting closed, S. W—— and myself entered into friendly conversation; but he soon introduced his favorite notions, no doubt for the purpose of exciting controversy; and to give the reader an idea of the readiness of Calvinists to attack us, and of the manner of their disputations, and with the method adopted for the purpose of setting aside their speculations, I give the substance of what passed on this occasion:

*L.* "I heard Mr. Denison preach a fine sermon the other evening."

*W.* "Did you, indeed! Was he dwelling on the doctrine of particular election?"

*L.* "No, sir; if he had been, I should probably not have been so well pleased, as I do not believe in the doctrine of fate—that God, for his own glory, foreordained whatsoever comes to pass."

*W.* "That is what you call the doctrine of fate, is it? Well, I never could see how it is possible that any man can have consistent views of the character of God, without believing him to be infinite in knowledge."

*L.* "I do not doubt that God is infinite in knowledge."



*W.* "Well, I never could see how God could know a thing unless he had decreed that it should be."

*L.* "Do you believe God is as wise as man?"

*W.* "Yes, I believe God is infinite in knowledge."

*L.* "Do you not remember that man foretold that in June, 1806, there would be an eclipse of the sun? And was it not fulfilled exactly to the day and hour?"

*W.* "Yes; I recollect it all."

*L.* "Well, did the man decree that the sun should be eclipsed at that time?"

*W.* "No, of course, he did not."

*L.* "Then if man may foreknow a thing without decreeing it, may not God likewise? But, sir, it is your doctrine that denies the infinitude of the knowledge of God."

*W.* "How do you make that out?"

*L.* "Do you not believe that the knowledge and decree of God, are one and the same?"

*W.* "Yes, certainly."

*L.* "Well, wherever there is a decree, there must be a being who makes it, and the author of a decree must exist prior to the decree which he makes. Now, God is the author of his own decrees, and he existed before they were made; and his decrees and knowledge being the same, it follows that he existed before his knowledge; or, in other words, if he could not know any thing before he decreed that it should be, the time he existed prior to his decrees was a time in which he knew nothing! But herein, sir,



is the mistake. Knowledge and decree are not one and the same. Knowledge is an attribute of the Divine nature, and decree is an act or purpose of the Divine mind. Then, if a decree is an act or purpose of the Divine mind, there must have been a time when it was enacted or purposed, and a time previous to that when it was not yet enacted or purposed; and if the decree is the same as knowledge, there must have been a time when there was no knowledge, simply because there was a time when there was no decree."

W. "Well, I can not clear it up, but if Mr. D. was here, he could clear it up."

L. "No, sir; I beg leave to say that Mr. D. can not clear it up; neither can any other man, in harmony with the doctrines of Calvinism. But, Mr. W——, you are a Universalist!"

W. "No, sir, I am no Universalist."

L. "Does any thing take place in the world contrary to the will of God?"

W. "Nothing; he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

L. "Then all men do the will of God, do they not?"

W. "O, yes, of course."

L. "Well, the Savior said, 'If any man do the will of my Father, the same is my brother, my sister, and my mother;' and these words denote the most intimate union with him—a union which, if we possess it, will enable us to overcome all our enemies, and entitle us to reign with him forever. True,

we can not overcome and reign with him, unless we do his will. But you say, all do his will; and if they do, they will most certainly all be saved."

The above conversation took place in the presence of the congregation. The people listened attentively, and we all parted in friendship.

We preached on St. Albans Point, where we had an excellent society. Here were brother Brooks, the two Duntons and their wives, brother Green, who finally became a local preacher, and brother Veets, then an excellent local preacher. He subsequently settled in the northern part of Ohio, and died some years ago in the faith of the Gospel. He was a charming man, and greatly beloved. The members of this society were much persecuted. They could find no protection against outrage from their enemies, by appealing to the law; because the officers thought that Methodists ought not to be protected in their worship. One of the brothers Dunton told me he had been compelled to run his horse all the way home from the county-seat, in order to escape the fury of the mob—and that, when called to the seat of justice to attend court; and for no other reason than that he was a Methodist. Nevertheless, God blessed them, and they flourished like olive-trees planted in the courts of the Lord's house. They were a little Church founded upon solid rock, and "the gates of hell could not prevail against" them. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name!"

One beautiful Sabbath morning of the summer of this year, I was preaching on the Point in a barn, when a number of young people came over in a boat from Georgia township, in Vermont, among whom was a young gentleman of the name of Nicholas White, who was engaged in teaching school. They came on a sort of pleasure excursion, but the attention of this young man was arrested, and he looked and listened with astonishment. He was awakened, and soon afterward gave his name as a probationer for membership in the Church. He then invited me to go over and preach in his school-house. This I did on the day he joined, and at the end of the sermon called on him to close the meeting with prayer. This was putting him to work very soon, but I knew that if he was converted he must pray; and being in the neighborhood of his friends, I thought that to have him thus decidedly commit himself to the service of God, would have a salutary effect both upon himself and others; and I was not mistaken. He was faithful, and soon obtained license to exhort—then to preach—then he became a member of the New York conference, and, if living, is still a member of that honored body of self-denying men of God. Notwithstanding the opposition we received from the people of St. Albans, and in the neighborhood, before leaving the circuit I preached in the town; and, a few years after this, the place became a station, which has been well sustained. God can work and none can hin-



der. "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."

While on this circuit, a brother obtained the privilege from the officers, and made an appointment for me in the town-house, in Fairfield. This town was occupied by Presbyterians; and as soon as the minister heard of my appointment, he determined to crowd me out and preach himself. The brother who made the appointment for me, came and informed me of the fact, and inquired if I would yield. I told him I should preach at the time appointed. I went to the place before the hour, selected my text and hymn, and waited for the congregation; but when the minister and his company came in, I rose up and commenced the service. Upon seeing my firmness, and the start I had of them, they sat down and quietly listened, while I preached from John iv, 14: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This, I believe, was the first Methodist sermon ever preached in that town.

In the course of the same year, I was invited to preach in another town which had never been visited by the Methodists. Here a gentleman of considerable wealth and influence, living in the place, took my arm, saying it might not be safe for me to walk the street alone. He had no religion, yet he was in favor of liberty of conscience—wished to hear



for himself—and determined that those of his neighbors who wished to hear Methodist preaching, should have the opportunity. Thus God raised up for us friends in the midst of our enemies.

And here let me say that those were the days of real prosperity to our Zion. True, we had but comparatively few members, yet what we had were of the right stamp. Worldly men would not join us through sinister motives. No influx of pride and folly had yet corrupted her communion, endangering the spirituality, life and power of her simple worship. Seldom did any unite with us without a mind made up to serve God through life, and to follow Christ through evil report as well as good. In the midst of opposition, we were the happiest people on earth. We loved God and each other, took joyfully the reproaches of the world, and delighted greatly in the services of the sanctuary. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" This was the language of our hearts. Methodists would go forty and fifty miles to quarterly meetings. These were our great festivals. Here we renewed our covenants with God and his people, obtained encouragement and strength in our souls, and rejoiced together in the salvation of God. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Truly our fellowship was with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

At the close of the year of toil and privation, I found that God's grace had been all-sufficient, and

returned to my family, having received the sum of sixty-five dollars and some cents, quarterage, and about five dollars' worth of presents. And how thankful I was that a kind Providence had preserved us all alive and in health, to see the close of the conference year! And how forcibly does the winding up of the year's labor remind the itinerant of the truth that here we have no continuing city! Then he sees the shortness of time, the vanity of the world, and feels the importance of being ready for the close of life, and for the judgment-day, when he shall give account of his stewardship. God grant that, as the revolving years roll us onward to the judgment-seat, we may so acquit ourselves as to triumph over the evils that surround us, and be able to sing—

Away with our sorrow and fear,  
We soon shall recover our home!  
The city of saints shall appear—  
The day of eternity come.  
From earth we shall quickly remove,  
And mount to our native abode;  
The house of our Father above—  
The palace of angels and God."

## CHAPTER IV.

## GRAND ISLE CIRCUIT.

HAVING traveled two years under the presiding elder, and having made up my mind to continue in the work, if an opening should present itself—indicating that it was the will of God that I should, I now offered myself to the New York conference, and in May, 1811, was admitted on trial, and appointed to the Grand Isle circuit, on Lake Champlain. This was a two weeks' circuit, including the South Hero, the Middle, the North Hero, the Vineyard, and a point of land which ran down into Canada. The scenery was picturesque—well calculated to impress the mind with sentiments of reverence, and lead to admiration of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator in beautifying the earth with so much pleasing variety.

I moved my family, and situated them on the circuit, by renting a small room with the privilege of setting a bed in the loft. We found ourselves in very narrow quarters. In order to get out, we must pass through three doors, and when the wind blew from a certain point of the compass, our chimney had a powerful draught—the wrong way. On such occasions, our only alternative was to extinguish the



fire, and dispense with it till the wind changed. "And did you live?" Yes, and we still live, and, thank God! that Methodist preachers are not obliged to situate their families now, as we were then. We look upon the change, and with gratitude exclaim, "What hath God wrought!"

We lived on the South Island, where we formed agreeable acquaintance with several families who treated us kindly, and sought to make us as comfortable as circumstances would permit. Here were two families of the name of Lauden, two of the name of Jones, brother Hackets, and others, many of whom are gone to rest. The numerous virtues of these disciples of Christ, with whom we used to mingle in worship, are embalmed among the heart's choicest memories.

I had an appointment in a small village in Canada, where we occupied a large school-house, in which also a reverend gentleman of another persuasion sometimes officiated. I was in the habit of urging my hearers to "cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Yea, I insisted that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." But the reverend gentleman took exceptions, and thought it his duty to enlighten the people in reference to this matter. He came and delivered a wonderful sermon—and wonderful it was—for the purpose of destroying all our anticipations of deliverance from sin through the blood of Christ, without



the assistance of the purgatorial power of the "king of terrors." In describing the righteous, he said, "I do not know whether I am of the character or not, but this much I do know: I have the proudest heart of any man in the world; yea, my heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; yea, I have committed sin enough in one prayer to damn a thousand souls; yea, further, I have committed sin enough standing here preaching this sermon to damn a world!" This was doing it after the old style.

When I came round to my appointment, a friend told me what had occurred, and described the sermon. I proceeded to preach from Prov. xxviii, 13: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

The preacher alluded to was present, expecting me to say something of his sermon. After speaking of the different methods by which men cover their sins, I noticed the duty of confession. Under this head, I remarked that some men confess more than they were ever guilty of—they make themselves out worse than they really are. "Did you not," said I, "hear the Rev. Mr. — say here, the other day, that he had the proudest heart in the world—that his heart was deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked—that he had committed sin enough in one prayer to damn a thousand souls—that he had committed sin enough standing

here preaching that one sermon to damn a world! Now, if that man told the truth, I advise him never to pray again, unless he asks God to give him a better heart; and never to preach another sermon, for if he keeps on in his present course, *he will* damn a great many souls; and I, for one, do not wish to be damned by any man's preaching or praying." I told the congregation that I had a better opinion of these men than they appear to have of themselves—that they were not near so bad as they pretended, but that it was a kind of "voluntary humility," which prompted them to tell how bad they supposed themselves to be. There was as much impropriety in confessing too much as too little; we should be honest, confess all, but no more and no less; and if we thus come before God with deep humility of soul, trusting only in the merits of Jesus Christ for acceptance, we shall obtain salvation; for the text says, "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy."

The preacher took it all in good part, simply remarking that I had sent him to hell and prayed him out again. The friends treated me well here; they welcomed me to their houses, sympathized with me in all my cares and toils, and I have no doubt prayed the divine blessing upon me.

In August we held a camp meeting on North Island. On Saturday night, the rowdies gave us considerable trouble. I found it necessary to be on my feet continually, to prevent depredations. The

labor and anxiety so completely exhausted me that I thought I should never have another such meeting in the bounds of my work. But Sabbath was a blessed day. There was an immense concourse of people present, and the preaching was in the demonstration and power of the Holy Ghost. Sabbath night, the rowdies left, and the display of Divine power in the congregation was great. Sinners were convicted and converted to God. Like Jacob, we said, "The Lord is in this place, and we knew it not." The scene reminded us of the words of the Lord to Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The grove was made vocal with the high praises of God. Then I thought I should be willing to hold a camp meeting every quarter.

God be praised that camp meetings were ever thought of! Their origin, the reader will recollect, was entirely providential. Many attend these meetings, and hear the Gospel, who would not go to preaching on ordinary occasions; and doubtless there are souls in heaven singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, who, but for these extraordinary services, might have lived and died in sin, and sunk down to perdition. I knew a man in the state of New York, who was quite wicked, and seldom attended divine worship of any kind—but went to camp meeting, and acted for some time as ringleader among the profane, and then came into the congregation; and while standing with his back to a tree,



looking upon the scene before him, the power of God smote him—flashing conviction upon his mind and heart; and there he stood as if petrified, and almost cold as dead. Before the meeting closed, he was happily converted, joined the Church, and in a short time was preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. “But he was one of the elect,” says the Calvinistic objector, “and would have been brought in any how!” Hold, brother! do you not believe “God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass?” Then please remember, camp meetings come to pass.

What thrilling, soul-cheering times I have experienced in the tented grove! The contemplation of these gives me, even now, a new spring of joy and gladness. There the best spirits of our Zion assembled, and after spending several days in devout worship, gathering new strength, building up the feeble, and pointing the inquiring to the fountain of life, they went out to spread the flame of their new zeal among their associates in different and distant parts. Thus an influence for good was often sent out from the camp meeting which subsequently resulted in the conversion of souls who had not been there at all. I received quite a number into the Church, as the fruits of this camp meeting, beside the general increase of piety among the old members.

During the winter, we held a quarterly meeting in brother L——’s barn. “What, hold quarterly



meeting in a barn, in the dead of winter?" Yes, reader, I have attended a number of such. On those occasions we had crowds of people, and no meeting-house. We would then resort to the barn, and, giving the floor to the women, the men would take the loft, sit close together, with hearts warmed with divine love, and sing, and pray, and shout the praise of God, with hearty good-will. At this meeting we were favored with some divine influence, and closed with rather an upward tendency.

The preacher on Fletcher circuit, brother B——, proposed to change with me one round—and as that was my field of labor, the previous year, and as a number on my circuit desired baptism, which I was not authorized to administer, being yet unordained—I consented to the proposal. Brother B—— came on, and while preaching in a school-house, one evening, there was a young lady standing and warming herself, when a young man stepped up by her side and said, "Good evening, Miss." Having been well reared, the young lady deigned him no reply, but turned away in disgust. He then sat down and commenced talking to others; whereupon, brother B—— said to him, "Can you not be still?" He replied, "If you could squeeze the brandy out of me and bottle it up, perhaps I might." Said the preacher, "I wish, sir, you would hold your peace." Then clinching a writing-desk, he replied, "I am holding a small piece, and will hold it as long as I can." Said brother B——, "Is there not some one here

that will put that young man out of the house?" The young man replied, "You would preach half a dozen sermons easier than you would put me out of the house." The reader will discover in this an exemplification of the words of Solomon, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whoso is deceived thereby is not wise." This young man, with his associates, went and complained of themselves, and saved half their fine. For, Methodists as we were, we could enjoy some legal protection at this place. But I ought to say that this is not a fair specimen of the young men on the island. Generally they were well reared, and treated us with respect; but wherever young men have unrestrained access to ardent spirits, some of the "baser sort" will ruin themselves, and disgrace the community.

Brother B—— left some of my appointments and went home; so, on returning and finding the work neglected, I discovered that I would better have remained on my own circuit; and from that time to this, I have not entered into another such an arrangement. Some time after this, I met with brother B—— and complained to him for leaving my work. He replied, "Well, I am a poor, crooked stick." I remarked to him that I should not mind his being crooked, if he did not always crook one way, and that toward home. And I am still persuaded that when a preacher can just break off and leave his work, to go home, he ought to locate and stay at home.

In the month of April, I rode fourteen miles on the ice, as afterward discovered, in constant peril of my life. At one place I saw a large crack just before me; but putting spurs to my horse, he jumped it, carrying me safely over. A brother from North Island attempted to cross with a sleigh, directly after me, but one of his horses fell through and was drowned. You could force an ax through the ice, that same day, in the road over which I passed but a few hours before. When I learned this, I was greatly thankful to my heavenly Father, who preserved me from a watery grave. Yes, it was the hand of a kind Providence that took care of me in that perilous journey. Once before, that same divine hand saved me while traveling on the ice, when one-fourth of the steps of my horse broke through. There was no alternative but to rush forward in the way till I reached the shore.

“Through hidden dangers, toils and deaths,  
He gently cleared my way.”

That I still live, is a wonder to myself and others. When I started out to preach, my friends thought I could not endure the toil and privation of itinerant life, through one year; but now forty-seven years are past, and I am still a probationer in time. It is all of the mercy of God, and I ought to love him more, and serve him better. I pray God that my remaining days may prove the earnestness of my desire to dwell only in him!



We ought always to labor in faith, whether we have much feeling or not, for we know not when we do the most good. Here is an illustration: While on this circuit, I preached one evening on North Island, but felt gloomy, and had but little enjoyment; in class meeting I was surprised to find the members all alive, and to hear them tell how greatly they were blessed under the preaching. To me it was very strange, for I could not find much enjoyment, even in the class meeting. The next morning, I called to see an afflicted disciple, who had been thirteen years confined to her bed, but was always happy. Upon entering her room she said, "Brother Lewis, you had a good meeting last night." I replied that the members seemed happy, but I had rather a poor time myself. "Why," said she, "the family say you preached better than you have done since you came on the island." After prayers, I went to the other end of the island, and had scarcely entered the house at which I was calling, when a friend addressed me much as the afflicted sister had done. I made the same reply as before. "Why," said this friend, "our people say, you beat yourself—that they never heard you preach so well as you did last night!" I then concluded that, as preachers of the Gospel, we are not judges of our own efforts; that, sometimes, where we think we have done most, we have in reality accomplished but little, and that sometimes when we think we have done nothing, God blesses our labor to the positive good of souls. Much also depends on



the spirit of the hearer. He that listens to the word with an open heart, seeking spiritual nourishment for his soul, and praying God to bless the speaker and the word spoken, will seldom fail of finding divine truth sweet as the honey-comb. But those who listen only for intellectual gratification, are seldom pleased or profited. I know we should always preach as well as we can, and leave the result with God who only can "give the increase;" but I confess I never could feel satisfied without being made happy in my own soul, while trying to preach to others. And surely it is our privilege to find happiness in this work, for if we have been "moved by the Holy Ghost" to preach the Gospel, we may claim our Savior's special promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world!"

This was a year of considerable trial to me. I was greatly wanting in experience as a preacher, and yet had pastoral charge, in this circuit, of the Church of God, which he purchased with his own blood. I was deeply sensible of the responsibility of my position—felt my lack of wisdom, but asked of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. We enjoyed a reasonable degree of prosperity, and had over a hundred accessions to the Church.

I closed my labors on this circuit in May, 1812, having received one hundred and twenty-four dollars for the year. We paid our own house-rent. All the time of my connection with the New York conference, provisions ranged as follows: Corn, from 75 cts. to

\$1.25 per bushel; wheat, from \$1.25 to \$2.25; pork, from \$5 to \$10 per hundred; hay, from \$5 to \$20 per tun, and other things in proportion. Does the reader inquire how we lived? We had a little means of our own, and Mrs. Lewis plied the needle, day and night, till she found it necessary to wear glasses at thirty-five. But God was with us, and He is still with us, and we have food to eat, raiment to wear, and a house to shelter us from summer's heat and winter's cold. We are surrounded by kind friends, and lift up our hearts to Heaven in thankfulness for the temporal and spiritual blessings of this life, and for the bliss-inspiring hope of an immortal life of joy and peace in a world all radiant with the smile of God!

## CHAPTER V.

## BRANDON CIRCUIT—FIRST YEAR.

AT the conference of May, 1812, I was appointed to Brandon circuit, with brother Thomas Madden for my colleague. Our field of labor extended over twenty-six townships, in some of which were several appointments. War having been declared against England by our Government, the situation of my colleague, as a Methodist preacher in the United States, was rendered very unpleasant, and resulted in his leaving the work some time before the year expired. He owned land in Canada West, and his father-in-law lived there—he having joined the British in the Revolutionary war, and continued a half-pay officer to the time of which I write—so that brother Madden and his wife were, from interest and association, all on one side. This rendered them very unpopular, and very unhappy, although brother M. was an excellent preacher. Some time in the winter they determined to visit their friends in Canada, and I advised them to take their children along. Upon this, sister M. said, “You don’t want us to come back then.” I replied, “When you arrive there and find you can’t come back, you will wish your children were with you.” Brother M. said that when he



reached there, if he found he could not go into Canada and out again when he wished, he would not cross over the line. They went, and the British made brother Madden a prisoner of war. They then sent for their children, and we willingly gave them up to join their parents; and I have never seen my colleague since. I had several letters from him, and think it probable that he enjoyed himself better than he could have done on this side of the line; but, how any one can prefer that Government to ours, is passing strange to me. I love the land of my birth. My father fought for the liberty of which we boast. The noble blood of patriot martyrs consecrated this whole land to freedom, and—bating the three and a half millions of slaves, whose groans pierce the heavens—we are the best governed people beneath the sun; and I trust all who choose to seek asylum in our country, will always find ample protection against the oppressions of tyranny.

Politics ran high. Some, in our part of the country, violently opposed the national administration, and denounced the war with unwonted fury. I remember stopping once to rest, at the house of brother G.—he kept public house—when Major Powell, and some other British officers, came in. They were hardly seated before two men, living near by, came in, and, after heartily shaking hands with them, commenced a tirade of abuse against our Government, interspersed with horrid curses upon the war. I sat listening, for some time, and then, addressing one of the men, said,



“Sir, you speak too diminutively of the Government under which you live. If you were to go into Canada and say half so much against that Government, they would hang you up between the heavens and the earth! Now, sir, if that Government is so much better than ours, why don’t you go there?” He replied that “that Government is the best in the world.” “Very well,” said I, “but why do you not go there? I advise you to start immediately, and, rather than fail, I will pay for moving one load of your goods. If that is the best Government in the world, you ought to be off at once.” Major P. then said, “Mr. Lewis, your people can never succeed in this war—they are too much divided; it is not so with us—we are united to a man.” I replied, “Major, I know you, and where you have been: Gen. Clark took you and your men prisoners, and you were sent down to Greenbush. There you probably heard some speak against their own Government, and now you are returning to be exchanged, and here you hear two men do the same thing; but what of all that? What if all New England should rise against the General Government? The power of the Federal Union would still be unshaken!”

“Well,” said the Major, “you have gained nothing from old Clark’s conduct; our Government has sent and taken all the inhabitants of one of your towns.”

“What town is that?” said I.

“Alburg,” said the Major.

“Well, you are welcome to them,” said I, “and I hope you will not let them come back again; for the place was inhabited by Tories, and I have learned that enemies at home can do a great deal more harm than those at a distance.” However, the Major was mistaken. The inhabitants of the town were not taken; so we had to live with them as before.

But, notwithstanding the occasional opposition, the general sentiment of our people was in favor of the war. The majority cordially supported the administration, and thought “John Bull” had been borne with too long in impressing our seamen, and searching our vessels. The spirit of freemen was fully aroused. Hundreds rushed to arms, ready, at any sacrifice, to repel the British invaders. But war is a calamity to any people. Though permitted by the Almighty, and sometimes employed, in his providence, as the means of punishing wicked nations, and though he overrules it in its results, rendering it subservient to his own purposes of evangelizing the world, it is, nevertheless, antagonistic to the spirit of the Gospel, and always to be regarded as the last resort to throw off oppression, and to maintain the rights of our manhood, with freedom to worship God.

I know it has been said that war is a glorious strife between contending nations; and that the brilliant parades, cheering music, and waving banners stir up the soul, and arouse to action, the slumbering patriotism of the people, urging them on to heroic deeds, and to the acquisition of martial glory! But

war is more than this: it is the destruction of many lives—the desolation of towns, cities, and country-places—the sacrifice of millions of money—the enemy of the arts and sciences—the demoralization of the people—the rupture of the ties of friendship—the prostration of commercial interests—the downfall of numerous benevolent institutions—and the mightiest obstacle to the advancement of civilization!

War consigns innocent wives and children to helpless widowhood and orphanage, compelling them to drag out, in poverty and wretchedness, the life God gave them for happiness and usefulness. War authorizes robbery, oppression, and violence; and by familiarizing so many with wholesale outrages upon the rights of others, weakens the tenure by which we hold our property, our liberty, and our lives. War excites the baser passions, distorts the public mind, establishes a false standard of merit, and tends to elevate the physical above the intellectual accomplishments. It thus creates a morbid taste for military exploits, and leads aspiring youths to put forth ambitious efforts to acquire martial fame, rather than to excel in the pursuits of peace.

No proper estimate can be made of the frightful ravages of war. The amount of human suffering it has entailed on our world, is past computation. The withering blight has fallen on each successive generation, from time immemorial. The sighs, the tears, the groans, the inexpressible anguish, which war has



caused, will not be fully known till eternity shall unroll the dark record!

And still men love war. Trivial misunderstandings arise between neighboring nations, and immediately heated politicians plunge into angry disputes which nothing can settle but a resort to arms. Then the war-cry is shouted through the land! Instruments of death are multiplied with all rapidity. Men, trained for the desperate conflict, are hurried to the field. Like infuriated beasts, they thrust each other through, till human gore runs in torrents, and human souls, by scores and hundreds, are driven into the presence of a holy God! But from the details of the battle-field the heart sickens and turns away.

But men will not always delight in carnage. Christianity will yet diffuse her peaceful principles among the nations, and inaugurate a better civilization. Her transforming power will be felt by rulers as well as subjects. The instruments of death will then be turned into implements of husbandry, and war will be learned no more. Men will no longer be counted valiant according as they have faced the death-dealing artillery, or butchered their fellow-mortals. God hasten the day! And may we never more hear the roar of the wide-mouthed cannon, the rattle of small arms, or the clash of swords, the groans of the dying, or the wail of the bereaved!

But to return. I was now left alone on this large circuit, and, although the prevailing tendency of the times was to irreligion, we had some precious seasons



of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Sinners were awakened, converted, and added to the Church, and believers were strengthened and built up in their most holy faith.

One of my preaching-places was Mount Holly. I used to go there and preach, then visit, sing and pray with the families, and the next morning ride twenty-three miles before breakfast; then ride three miles further and preach, sometimes to six or eight persons. Here, however, we had some good times, and God increased the little society both in numbers and graces. At this place, I formed a most delightful acquaintance with a family of the name of Anderson; and, after the fatigue of such a long ride, it was truly refreshing to find one's self at home with such kind friends. They were surrounded with worldly comforts, and their warm-hearted friendship increased the pleasure of their society. Many a happy night did I spend beneath their roof, talking of the loving-kindness of our God.

In Pittsford we had a very good society of from forty to fifty members—warm-hearted, zealous, happy souls. Here the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches were established, had meeting-houses, and regarded us as intruders into *their* “parishes.” One day I fell in company with Elder H——, in the road, and, after riding with him some distance, said, “Well, Elder, what is the state of religion in your Church?” “O, a pretty cold time with us,” said he; “but this is our seed-time, you know; if we should always

have harvest, we should have no seed-time; and if we always had seed-time, we would never have harvest." True, in regard to the vegetable kingdom; but is not this illustration resorted to sometimes as an apology for barrenness in the kingdom of heaven? I thank God, the economy of grace is such that we may have seed-time and harvest both at once. We are often permitted to sow the seed of the kingdom, and immediately witness the glorious fruit!

We labored under great disadvantage through want of meeting-houses. We had but one on this large circuit, and that was built on a cheap plan, and quite small. Our preaching was in school-houses, dwelling-houses, barns, shops, and in God's own temple, the leafy grove. But the Lord blessed us greatly, and being sweetly united in the bonds of "the glorious Gospel," we were happy. It was a great cross in those days to be a Methodist; hence, the people generally counted the cost before giving their names for membership; and when they did come they generally held on their way, growing strong in faith and hope. In the village of Brandon we had an excellent society. Here my principal home was at the house of brother Pomeroy, father to Rev. Charles Pomeroy, of the New York conference. In Leister our society was large. At this place, I made the acquaintance of Judge Olin, the father of the lamented Dr. Stephen Olin, the distinguished writer, traveler, preacher, divine, and scholar. The Judge was a tall, robust man. He used to attend our meetings, and, on first seeing

him in the congregation, I took him to be a sleepy, dull man, and not much given to talk; but, on further acquaintance, after visiting him in his own house, my first impressions proved incorrect; for he was a man of sound mind, of extensive information, and a great talker. He told me he thought our Church polity the best in the world, so long as the officers have plenty of religion; "but," said he, "you have the machinery all arranged so that if your leading men lose their religion, they can cut your heads off at a stroke." I told him that all Church governments have their difficulties; that we did not pretend that ours was entirely perfect; but it had hitherto worked well, with as little, and perhaps less friction than any other, and we were disposed to hold on to it; and that I believed it would stand the test as long as Church governments are needed in the world.

I formed the acquaintance of many Christian families on this circuit, who welcomed me to their houses, ministered to my temporal wants, and sympathized with me in all my labors, trials, and privations. The year closed with the very best of feeling among the entire membership. In looking over the stewards' book, it appeared that I had received one hundred and fifty dollars for the year. After a few days' rest, I started to conference in company with my presiding elder, Rev. Samuel Draper.

On our way, we called at a house to lodge for the night, when the man came out, shook hands heartily with brother Draper, and asked him if he remem-



bered preaching up in the Green Mountains at a certain time, when he had but one man for a hearer. Brother D. remembered it well. He took the text, "Thou art the man;" and the hearer was convicted and converted to God, and now stood before us, happy to welcome us to his house.

We often preached to small congregations in those days, and incidents similar to the above have often occurred. Our business was to declare the whole counsel of God to few or many, whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear. "Sow thy seed in the morning, and in the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether both shall be alike good."

The conference sat in Amenia, New York. The exercises of the session were peculiarly interesting to me. In company with several others, I was admitted into full connection, and elected and ordained deacon. In the examination of character, it appeared that one brother had not been to his work. His reason was, that his appointment was too far off. He had friends, and wished to live near them. It was also discovered that this brother was somewhat afflicted with that unfortunate disease, the "big-head." He was suspended. He was a man of more than ordinary mind for one of his years, but by some means or other, he found it out when he was too young, and was led to "think more highly of himself than he ought to think;" and then, of course, he was ruined for a

Methodist preacher. Whenever a young preacher is attacked with this disease—unless, by some means, he is cured immediately—his usefulness is at an end. “Humility is the forerunner of advancement and honor; and ambition, the harbinger of destruction and ruin.” Humility adorned the life of Jesus, and crowns the worship of angels. And shall man—poor, frail, short-sighted man—called to minister in holy things—to lead wretched, sinful, perishing souls from the verge of hell to the foot of the cross of Jesus, to be pardoned, purified, and saved through his atoning blood—shall man, I say, thus employed, be proud or vain of a little talent, which God has given him for improvement, and for which he must give account in the great day? Rather

“Let me be little and unknown,  
Loved and prized by God alone.”

## CHAPTER VI.

## BRANDON CIRCUIT—SECOND YEAR.

FROM the conference of May, 1813, I was returned to Brandon circuit, with a young brother, B——N——, for my colleague. We traveled together in harmony. He was brought up in Canada, was without polish, staid with us a few years, and then concluded there was too much labor devolving on a Methodist itinerant—got the “big-head”—joined the Episcopalians, and became a “lay-reader” in the “Church;” of his subsequent history I know nothing more.

It was strange, in those days, to hear men complain of hard labor in the Methodist ministry. We used to vie with each other for difficult appointments, considering such the more responsible, and therefore the more honorable, as affording better opportunity for self-denial, and for testing our attachment to the cause of Christ. For the first nine years of my itinerant life, I volunteered for work in the old North district, in the New York conference. I never desired to be any thing other than a traveling—yes, a traveling Methodist preacher. In the midst of the toil of such a life, I could ever sing,

“This work shall make my heart rejoice,  
And spend the remnant of my days.”



I was soon among old friends, who gave me their warm congratulations, and contributed in every possible way to make us comfortable among them for another year. This was truly a warm-hearted, generous people. I loved them dearly, and I love them still; but most of them have passed on before me to the land of promise. I pray God to keep me faithful a little longer, and then I shall meet them in heaven.

This year we took in a new appointment, in New Haven, Vermont. We met with much opposition, but the hand of our God was upon us for good, and we had a glorious revival of religion. We organized a new society of forty or fifty members, among whom were some noble spirits. One of these was Mrs. Smith—sister to Rev. William Jewett, of the New York conference. She now resides near Granville, Ohio, and enjoys the esteem of her brethren and sisters as a worthy member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. These were seasons of refreshing indeed. God was with his people, working salvation in the midst of the earth! We did then, do now, and ever will, give all the glory to God, “who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.” “It was not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.”

On going to one of my appointments, in the remotest part of the circuit, I took a road on which I was not acquainted, and, having a long ride, thought best to stop at a public house and refresh my horse. While sitting in the “bar-room,” there were present

two men enjoying themselves exceedingly in conversation, who, I learned, were Rev. Mr. W——, of the Baptist Church, and Mr. M——, one of his deacons. When ready to start, I inquired if there was a nearer way to East Bay than through New Haven. Mr. W—— answered, "Yes, but to what part of East Bay do you wish to go?" "To Mr. Harlow's." "To Isaac Harlow's?" said he. "I do not know his first name, sir." "Well, is he a Methodist?" "Yes, sir." "And are you a Methodist preacher?" "Yes, sir." "Well I am a Baptist preacher," said he. "Yes, sir; how do you do, sir?" said I. "Mr. Harlow once belonged to the Baptist Church," said he; "but he was always a Methodist at heart." "And so is every man when his soul is converted," said I. At this the deacon spoke and said, "O no! I never was." (Here they both talked at once.) "One at a time," said I, "and it will last the longer, or both at once and the sooner over." The deacon continued, "When I was convicted I fought against God with all my might." "Well, did you not submit to God before you was converted?" "No," said the deacon, "I fought against him all the time!" "Well," said I, "St. Paul says, 'As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him;' and as you received him fighting against God, you must be walking in him fighting against God; and so you can not be one of his people; for the Bible says his people shall be willing in the day of his power; not that they shall be forced to submit, but they shall be a 'willing peo-

ple;' as the Psalmist said, so do they, 'I delight to do thy will, O God.'" He contended that God has determined to save certain persons, whether they will submit or not! How amazing is the power of prejudice! I insisted that men must first submit to God's terms, or he will never save them; and after considerable conversation, we parted in peace.

Some time in the summer, we established an appointment in Sudbury—a place in which there had never been a Methodist sermon preached. At my first visit to the place, I had only about a dozen hearers; but the Spirit of the Lord rested on me while I dwelt on these words: "But truly as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death." The little congregation manifested considerable interest; there was indeed a "shaking among the dry bones," and I felt strong confidence that God would favor us with a good work in the place. Opposition was excited, as a matter of course, but the Lord made bare his arm in our behalf, and we had a glorious time. One of my hearers asked a neighbor why he did not come to hear the Methodist preach. He replied that there was no need of coming, for they could hear him any where in the neighborhood. The Lord blessed me with a good pair of lungs, and the probability is that I had as many hearers that did not come to meeting as there were in the house. A good society of forty or fifty members was formed, as the result of these efforts.



An excellent brother lived here, of the name of Rhodes, who was, in every respect, well qualified to take charge of the class. And, O, how much depends on this! Many a society has dwindled away for the want of a suitable leader. He should possess deep piety, sound judgment, and strong feeling for the prosperity of Zion. His work is arduous and responsible. If any of his flock are absent, he should know the cause: if any one is sick he should visit and pray with him, and report the case to the pastor: if they are discouraged, he should counsel, instruct, and encourage them: if they are careless, he should exhort and expostulate with them: if they are wicked, he should affectionately admonish and reprove them; and, if they persist, or become out-breaking, he should have them excluded the Church, lest their example corrupt others. With such a leader, a society will scarcely fail to prosper. The Lord raise up such among us more and more—men full of faith and the Holy Ghost!

In the winter of 1813, the epidemic, called the plague, prevailed to an alarming extent. People were smitten down and carried off as rapidly as with the cholera. They would be taken with a pain in the finger, or thumb, or toe, or ear, and die in six or eight hours. They scarcely ever lived over twenty-four hours. This was a most dreadful calamity. Some of the best members of the Church were taken away at a stroke. I had to attend funerals almost every day, sometimes several in the same neighbor-

hood. These occasions afforded me opportunity to declare the Gospel to many who seldom, if ever, heard Methodist preaching; for, in that region, at that time, there was but little sociability with Methodists, on the part of other denominations.

I still found myself occasionally in collision with Presbyterian and Baptist preachers; but this was never with me a matter of choice. It was always more pleasant to me to live in harmony with all Christians, and to unite my efforts with theirs in assaulting, directly, the powers of darkness, and seeking the conversion of souls. Yet, when the peculiarities of Methodism were assaulted and misrepresented, I esteemed it nothing less than a sacred duty to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

I will now say, that, upon the whole, this was a happy year. Many precious souls were born into the kingdom, and united with us in Church fellowship. When the labors of this second year closed, I found the mutual attachment between pastor and people to be stronger than at the end of the first year. Religion is pre-eminently a social principle. It cements Christian hearts into one—lays, deep and broad, the foundation for reciprocal love and friendship in this life, and fits us for eternal association in the kingdom of our Father above.

"And if our fellowship below  
In Jesus be so sweet,  
What hight of rapture shall we know,  
When round his throne we meet!"

The next session of our conference was held in the city of New York, which furnished occasion for my first visit to that great emporium of trade. On the first Sabbath, I had an appointment to preach in the Green-Street Church, which I did from the words, "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" Had but a moderate time, as it was a new thing with me to preach in a great city. Subsequently, however, I had precious times in holding forth the word of life, in Duane-Street, Allen-Street, and in the old John-Street Church, on the spot where was erected the first Methodist church in America. The "city folks" were fond of listening to the preachers from up north, and we frequently had a shout in the congregation; and, I doubt not, that, when favored with an old-fashioned Gospel sermon, some of the New York Methodists will yet shout forth the praise of God in the midst of the Lord's house; for, there are among them, not only warm-hearted Christians, but some genuine, whole-souled Methodists.

I have sometimes been pained to hear a certain class of our members in the country, insinuate that city Methodists were destitute of the life and power of experimental religion, and were too proud and formal to possess the living faith that should characterize the followers of Christ. And, on the other hand, it can not be questioned that some of the members in the city look upon the membership in the country as destitute of true Christian refinement, if not as



ignorant enthusiasts. But I am happy to know that these improper views are entertained only by such of each class as have had little or no opportunity of mingling with those whose religious character they underrate. If there could be more intercourse between country and city Methodists, there would be found to exist more oneness of sentiment and feeling among them, than is frequently supposed. The spirit of Methodism is the same every-where. It is in reality but the spirit of genuine Christianity itself, and, therefore, is capable of adaptation to all the varied circumstances of human life. While Methodism can not be bent, in spirit, to all the gayeties and follies of fashionable life, it does not adopt an "iron bedstead" law, so as to prevent conformity to the decent usages of society. Christianity is designed to rule in all the kingdoms of the earth, by diffusing through all a spirit and power to mold the life after the Gospel standard, without bringing all the nations under one form of civil and social law; and so Methodism, which is "Christianity in earnest," is, and ought to be, susceptible of those outward modifications which different communities imperatively demand, so far as such modifications can be made without marring her spirit, *but no farther!*

In attending to the business of conference, at this session, in listening to remarks of older brethren in the ministry, and hearing the representations of the work of the Lord, in the different parts of our

geographical boundaries, I was instructed and edified. Like as the officers of an army, after a successful engagement with an obstinate foe, meet and detail the progress of the battle, as it transpired under their immediate supervision, in different parts of the extended field of strife, so these ministers of truth, officers in the army of the Lord, report at their annual convocation, the advancement made at different points, and the trophies won under the banner of the cross, and shout together the praises of the Captain of their salvation, through whose wisdom and power they have been led to achieve their glorious victories. At the close of the session, Mr. C——, the gentleman with whom I boarded, favored me with some fine presents, for which I was truly grateful, as the pittance received from my circuit was entirely inadequate to meet the wants of my family. At his urgent request, I mostly afterward put up with him, during my visits to the city, and he never failed to bestow upon me some substantial evidence of his undissembled friendship, and true Christian generosity. His presents, though not large, were always useful. Whosoever giveth to a disciple, shall not lose his reward.

The conference closed with a sterling address from the Bishop, after which we were all soon *en route* for our respective fields of toil, suffering, and triumph.

“When we asunder part,  
It gives us inward pain ;  
But we shall still be join’d in heart,  
And hope to meet again.”

## CHAPTER VII.

## CHARLOTTE CIRCUIT—TWO YEARS.

AT the close of the conference of May, 1814, my appointment was to the Charlotte circuit, in Vermont. My family had lived two years in Hubbardstown, in a house furnished by Major H——, who generously offered us the use of it another year, if my family would remain. I felt unwilling to leave them, and we proceeded to move to our circuit. The roads were now extremely bad. The Government had been hauling cannon and other munitions of war, and cut them up so that they were almost impassable. When we succeeded in getting through to Muncietown, where we expected to find a house in readiness, we ascertained that there was none provided, and none in the place that could be rented. We stored away our furniture under a shed, where it remained till we succeeded in renting part of a house for a few months. After some time, an infidel, a physician in the place, offered us the use of a house, if we would accept it. We did so, and moved in, thankful for the kindness, though the house was not very comfortable.

And here let me speak of the infidel doctor. He was a man of noble, generous impulses, though, like too many others, he imbibed infidel principles while



in college. He informed me, himself, that he was established in disbelief of the Scriptures before leaving the institution. When will all our colleges become nurseries of Scriptural Christianity, instead of "hot-beds" of corrupting infidelity? Heaven hasten the day! Some think the Church is turning aside from her appropriate work when she is vigorously laboring to endow colleges, and to build up institutions of learning under her immediate supervision and control. This is a grand mistake. The Church never will accomplish her glorious mission fully till she provides for the education of her children under such circumstances as will effectually guard them from the poisonous skepticism that lurks within the precincts of too many colleges. I bless God, the Church is becoming conscious of her responsibility at this point. Like the prophet casting salt into the springs to heal the waters of Jericho, she is beginning to purify these fountains of moral influence, that there may issue therefrom no more the streams of moral death. But the doctor now discovered his error, and came to my house three times in one night to ask me to pray for him. He was in an awful agony of soul. He said he had cursed his only Savior, and feared there was no mercy for him. I told him that Jesus died for sinners—for sinners of every class and hue—that he invites all who labor and are heavy laden to come unto him, and promises to give them rest. I assured him that the promises of the Gospel were not yea and nay, but yea and amen in Christ Jesus, and

that heaven and earth would pass away sooner than any one of them shall fail. I urged him to look to Calvary—to the rejected, despised Jesus of Nazareth, who prayed for his enemies while hanging upon the cross in the agony of death—as his only refuge. He did look to Christ. He pleaded and groaned for pardon through the blood of the everlasting covenant, and found peace in believing. What a blessed change was this! The caviling skeptic was humbled to the foot of the cross, and by the power of divine grace, was renewed and clothed in his right mind. His despairing wail of agony gave place to the song of victory and thanksgiving. After this, he often took me with him to visit his patients, to talk and pray with them; and he would join in the delightful work of pointing the sick and dying to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. And what a field of usefulness is open to the pious physician! He can whisper “Jesus” in the ear of many to whom the minister can have no access. Would to God that all who practice the “healing art” were men of faith and prayer!

Some time this summer, there was to be a camp meeting on Brandon circuit, and having traveled there, the two previous years, I felt anxious to attend it. The time came—I made ready and started, but, when fourteen miles from home, was taken sick. It was thought the attack would prove fatal. My wife was sent for, and we remained several weeks. The friends were very kind, and did all in their power to make us

comfortable. Many of the preachers called to see me, and sung and prayed with me, on their return from camp meeting. They told me that if prayer would keep me alive, I would not die then; for they had never heard so many prayers for one person as were offered for me on the camp-ground. "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." When I became some better, they put me in a carriage and took me home, where I remained several months before I was able to preach. During this long affliction the grace of God sustained my heart.

We were now living nearer the seat of war than we had been before. We were only seven miles from the Lake, on which M'Donough's celebrated battle was fought. Every thing relative to our safety depended on the success of the American arms in that desperate conflict. About the 1st of September, Sir George Prevost, commander of the British forces, moved his army to Plattsburg, and the British fleet sailed up Lake Champlain, for the purpose of making a simultaneous attack, by land and water. The British forces were far superior to the American, both in numbers and training—they consisting of veteran troops recently transported from the European wars which had just terminated. Generals Macomb and Moores hastily collected what forces they could—consisting, in large part, of New York militia, and prepared to meet the overwhelming force of the enemy, and check, if possible, this portentous invasion. The Americans abandoned the town at the approach of



the enemy, and it was occupied by the British. The place is situated on the banks of the Saranac, near its entrance into the Lake, and the American works were on the opposite side of the stream. Here the Americans prepared to give battle to their haughty foe. The American fleet was also inferior to that of the British. Our vessels carried eighty-six guns, and eight hundred men, while the British had ninety-five guns and over a thousand men. In every respect the odds were fearfully against us. It was a beautiful Sabbath morning, the 11th of September, when, at nine o'clock, we heard the thunder of the cannon on the Lake. I was just able to walk out with my cane. For a few minutes, my mind was considerably agitated; then all was calm within. I trusted that the God of power, who sustained our fathers through the Revolutionary struggle, would give us the victory that day. The people in the neighborhood rushed to the scene of action. It was an awfully solemn time. The roar of artillery, the rattle of musketry, with the vivid impression that scores of immortal souls were rushing into the eternal world, combined to inspire in my heart emotions of no ordinary character.

The Rev. Mr. W——, of Fairfield, Vermont, a Presbyterian minister, called upon the people of his parish to come to the rescue. A large number of them joined with him, and they hurried to the field. In crossing the Lake, their boat ran aground—whereupon the preacher cried out, “Follow me, boys!” and

dashed into the water. They followed him, gained the shore, and were soon in the midst of the battle. The "old priest," as they called him, was soon discovered down on his knees, taking deliberate aim at a "red coat."

The engagement commenced on water and land, at the same hour. The British troops on land made several desperate efforts to cross the Saranac, so as to storm the American works, but were foiled in every attempt; while the air was full of flying bombs, rockets, and hot balls, carrying death across the stream. On the water, every vessel was brought into action at once, and for over two hours the deadly strife raged with fury, the victory seemingly poised equally between the contending forces, when the *Saratoga*, of the American fleet, performed a most difficult maneuver; she warped round, and brought to bear a fresh broadside, which soon determined the fate of the day. Some of the enemy's vessels sunk, a few escaped, and the rest surrendered. The loss of the Americans was fifty-two killed and fifty-eight wounded. The loss of the British was eighty-four killed, and one hundred and ten wounded, and eight hundred and fifty-six prisoners. On land, the firing was kept up till night; then, under cover of the darkness, the whole force of Sir George Prevost precipitately fled, leaving behind the sick and wounded, with large quantities of munitions of war, much of which was discovered to be buried in the earth.

This was a most brilliant victory, and put an end to the war on Lake Champlain, and through that part of the country. The sensations of joy that filled the hearts of thousands, as the tidings of victory spread from place to place, may be imagined, but never can be described. God grant that the quiet of the holy Sabbath may never again be disturbed, in this lovely land, by the din of battle or the alarm of war.

But as Christians, we have a battle to fight with weapons which are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

"Angels our march oppose,  
Who still in strength excel—  
Our secret, sworn, eternal foes,  
Countless, invisible.  
From thrones of glory driven,  
By flaming vengeance hurl'd,  
They throng the air, and darken heaven,  
And rule this lower world."

This conflict began in Eden, when appetite gained the first victory over duty. Then the "Prince of darkness" became the "god of this world;" but he was scarcely seated on his usurped throne, before the proclamation issued from the palace of the Lord of lords that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. And when the fullness of time was



come, God sent forth his son in the likeness of sinful man; that, in the nature of man, as "the seed of the woman," he might destroy the works of the devil. He grappled with the monster in his own domain, by dying for the sins of the world, and came off with the triumphant shout of victory, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death!" He is the Captain of our salvation. In his name we trust. By his grace we may withstand all the assaults of the devil, and in the midst of the strife against the powers of darkness, sing—

"What though a thousand hosts engage  
A thousand worlds, my soul to shake;  
I have a shield shall quell their rage,  
And drive the alien armies back:  
Portray'd it bears a bleeding lamb;  
I dare believe in Jesus' name."

But to return. I found Methodism on this circuit the same as in my former fields. Nothing of very especial interest transpired in our bounds. It was a year of much personal affliction; so that I was in a great measure disabled from putting forth the active efforts for the promotion of the good work that I desired. My powers of endurance, after the protracted illness of the summer, were not sufficient to justify severe labors through the winter season; yet, when able, I followed the regular routine of duties on the circuit, and found that my labors were not in vain in the Lord. I found many excellent

spirits on this circuit, and closed the year, thankful to God, that through scenes of deep affliction, and the ragings of war, he had preserved us alive and restored my wonted health.

Our next conference sat in the city of Albany. At this session I was ordained elder, by the venerable Bishop M'Kendree. The Rev. Dr. Phœbus preached the ordination sermon from 2 Cor. vi, 7: "By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned." The discourse contained many remarks calculated to impress the mind with the importance of a thorough qualification for the ministerial office, especially by possessing the Holy Ghost, and love unfeigned. The venerable Bishop Asbury was with us, and I think this was the last session of our conference he ever attended.

From this conference—May, 1815—I was returned to the Charlotte circuit. This was very satisfactory to myself and family, and seemed equally pleasing to my friends in the circuit. They gave me a cordial welcome; and as I had been so much hindered from efficient service the previous year, on account of affliction, I now felt like devoting my energies anew to God and his work. The conference sent along with me my son in the Gospel, the Rev. Nicholas White, of whose conversion I have before spoken. He was a faithful laborer in the vineyard of the Lord—but he over-taxed his physical powers, produced hemorrhage from the lungs, and found it

necessary to desist from preaching for some time. He was able to preach but little, for several years; but at length recovered his health, was made effective, and continued in the work till one or two years ago. Since then, I suppose he is like his father in the Gospel, "superannuated." But if he had strength, I doubt not that he would still rush into the thickest of the battle, and fight valiantly for his king and his God. He was a worthy man, a faithful minister of the Lord Jesus, and a most companionable colleague. We traveled together harmoniously, and the Lord gave us many souls as seals to our ministry.

In Starksboro, we were favored with a precious revival of religion, in which we had the pleasure of receiving a large number into the Church. Here lived two twin brothers, who were awakened on the same day, both converted on one day, received into the Church on the same day, both licensed to exhort at once, licensed to preach at the same time, recommended for the traveling connection both at once, and finally admitted into the conference on the same day. At several other points on the circuit, the Church was blessed with the outpourings of the Holy Spirit, and sinners came flocking to the "ark of safety" like clouds, and as doves to their windows.

In the course of this year, in a village above where my family lived, the people—and I do not know that there was a professor of religion among them—built a neat house of worship and finished it completely,



with cupola and bell, and then invited me to settle among them as pastor. Among other things, they said, "Mr. Lewis, your people do not pay their ministers enough for a comfortable support—come settle with us and preach for us, and we will pay you better." I knew we did not get enough to support our families, but I could not find it in my heart to leave the itinerancy on that account; so, in my answer, I said to them. "The Savior's command is, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature;' but I do not find that he ever said, 'Stay and preach.'" Afterward, I went and preached for them from these words: "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent." In discoursing on these words, I took occasion to give my views of the relative advantages of a settled and traveling ministry, after which they ceased to importune. I subsequently learned that the preachers who followed us on this field, embraced that place in their regular labors, and that they had a glorious revival of religion; the people became converted, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, and their appointment, so novelly begun, became a strong point on the circuit. The place is probably a station ere this; for it is now over forty years since they built the meeting-house, and invited me to become their preacher. In that time great changes occur—some for the better, and some that do not work so well. But I bless God, that in all the changes that have taken place, the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church remain

unchanged; and I trust in God that those doctrines will ever remain unchanged; for I have the most unwavering belief that the founders of our denomination hit upon the true theology of the Bible.

And I still believe the Methodist Church polity is the best in the world. Disaffected persons may cry out "Despotism," "Tyranny," "Episcopacy," etc., but I have lived within her pale a great many years, and never yet found her economy oppressive. And no one need be alarmed about oppression in the Methodist Church, who wishes to be a self-denying, devoted Christian, and lay himself out to do good in his day and generation. But when persons become worldly and restless, and wish to make a fair show in religion without possessing its life and power, then her rules are found too stringent, and the cry of oppression is soon raised. So in regard to the ministry. A God-fearing, self-sacrificing Christian minister, whose object is to do good and save souls, never finds room for complaint; but the worldly, time-serving, half-hearted preacher, whose soul is not consecrated to the work of Christ, finds the itinerancy laborious, burdensome, oppressive. All I am, and all I have, I owe, under God, to the Methodist Episcopal Church. In all her trials, she has had my sympathy and prayers, and in all her glorious triumphs my heart has rejoiced. In her ministry, I have had a good share of hardship and toil, but, by the grace of God, I have not shunned the cross, nor shrunk from responsibility,

and my heart has been kept at peace with God,  
and in love to his Church.

“Beyond my highest joy,  
I prize his heavenly ways;  
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,  
Her hymns of love and praise.”

I closed my second year on Charlotte circuit, having preached in several places where Methodist preachers had not been permitted before to deliver their messages to the people. One had been beaten with rods, or with the cow-hide, and others were most shamefully treated; but in my day there, the prejudices of the people were yielding, and they have since then broken down. The light of a pure Gospel will always break off the shackles of prejudice, and emancipate the people from the thralldom of bigotry. It discovers to men their heaven-born right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. There is nothing like it to conquer the captious spirit of sectarianism. May it shine more and more till Christ shall come in glory to make up his jewels! “Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.”



## CHAPTER VIII.

## BRANDON CIRCUIT AGAIN—TWO YEARS.

OUR conference sat in May, 1816, in New-York city, but owing to the ill-health of my wife, I did not attend. We were this year sent again to Brandon circuit, which was quite gratifying to myself and family. We were, of course, well acquainted, and perhaps more attached to the people of that circuit, than of any place in which we had lived. My mind was also free from anxiety in reference to the matter, for one of the stewards had visited the presiding elder in order to induce him to use his influence to have me sent there. We soon moved back to Hubbardstown, where we resided the other two years we were on the circuit. The Rev. J. Byington was my colleague. He was an elderly man, though he had only traveled a few years. He was a man of strong mind, a good reasoner, and a very fine theologian; but on some account he was not very popular with the people. Men are not always valued according to their real worth. People are apt to be attracted by the tinsel of oratory, while they overlook the pure gold of reason and truth.

We took in a new appointment in Poultney—preached a few times, and then the people in whose

house our meetings were held, told me they would be pleased to have us continue preaching there, but their neighbors were so much opposed to my colleague, that they threatened to have no friendship with them, if they permitted him to preach in their house. They said to me, "You can preach here, but your colleague will have to desist." I replied that I and my colleague were one in the work—that he was a worthy man and ought to be heard, and that I could not consent to preach where he was not permitted to do the same. Then a gentleman living some three miles distant, invited us to preach in his house. We did so, and found large and attentive congregations, where we could worship in peace, and some good was done in the name of our divine Master. We met with some opposition at nearly every point, but the good Lord gave us favor in the eyes of many people, and souls were converted through the instrumentality of his own truth, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In the early part of this year, a young man whose parents were Baptists, went to New York city, for the benefit of his health, and while there attended meeting in the old John-Street Methodist church, where, for the first time in his life, he heard a Methodist sermon. After returning, he came and told me of his visit to the city, and of the sermon, and invited me to come over and preach in the township in which he lived. I sent an appointment—went, and found ten or twelve persons assembled to hear the stranger;

preached, and left another appointment. There were more out on my next visit; the new doctrine seemed to attract some attention; and this gave me encouragement to hope that the seed sown would soon produce some fruit. When preaching was over, about a dozen young people went into an adjoining room, and commenced singing some pieces of music. I went in and proposed to take part, and after singing several tunes with them, took occasion to make some remarks in regard to the privilege of singing the high praises of our Redeemer, and spoke of the fearful state of those who are cast out from his presence, and forever deprived of the delight and joy attending the celebration of the praise of God in his holy habitation above. The remarks were kindly received, seeming to make good impressions on the minds of the young persons, and in order to improve the occasion still further, I invited them to kneel with me in prayer; and while my heart was lifted up to heaven, invoking the blessing of God upon them, a scene presented itself such as angels delight to gaze upon. My young friends began to cry for mercy; the great deep of their hearts was broken up, and they poured forth their undissembled anguish, pleading for salvation in the name of Jesus. I continued praying with them and pointing them to the "Lamb for sinners slain," till four of them were happily converted to God. Before leaving, I said to them, "Now, my young friends, in four weeks from this time, I shall expect to see you in this room and learn how you are getting along."



But before I came again, the Baptists had three of them under the water, and, of course, into the Baptist Church. Although the Baptists and Congregationalists denounced us as "false teachers," and "wolves in sheep's clothing," they were very willing to take our converts on their Methodist experience. At my next appointment, I found the house crowded to overflowing, and preached from Hebrews ii, 3: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" We had a glorious season. In a short time we organized a class here, and continued to preach; for the Lord commanded his blessing upon us, so that prosperity attended us. Those young converts who were enticed into the Baptist Church, came back, bringing their parents with them; and they all continued steadfast in the doctrine of the apostles, in prayers, in fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, in the Methodist Episcopal Church; and great grace rested upon them. After organizing a society, and establishing a regular appointment, we applied for the use of the school-house in the neighborhood, and preached in it a few times; but the teacher was a Congregationalist, and being violently opposed to us, locked up the house. But God raised us up a friend in the person of a gentleman of materialistic sentiments. He was a man of wealth, had attended some of our meetings, and now proposed to furnish us a house to preach in which he owned in a village of considerable size. This was not a central point for our little society, but it was a fine place for a congre-

gation. "The wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." God continued to smile upon us for good, and finally I had the privilege of preaching Christ in the Baptist meeting-house, in the center of the township. The school-teacher who locked his door against us, came and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, and brought his wife along. Now the Methodists are a flourishing, influential Church, and have a large house of worship on one side of the public square. Truly, the handful of corn on the top of the mountain shakes like Lebanon. "This is the Lord's doing, and marvelous in our eyes!"

The summer of 1816 was a cold, dry season, far surpassing any known to me in all my experience. There was not one-fourth enough corn grown in the region where we lived to fatten meat for the use of the people. Wheat was very poor; potatoes almost entirely failed; hay was less than the fourth of a crop; pastures and water-streams dried up completely, and the cattle could be heard lowing mournfully for food and drink. People were much alarmed. The horrors of famine stared them in the face. I went to a gentleman living near who had a quantity of old wheat, and purchased enough to sustain my family another year, paying for it \$2.25 per bushel. In Sudbury—the place in which I organized a new society, while on the circuit before—I was preaching in the Presbyterian meeting-house, upon invitation of the members, their minister having

left—and proposed having a day of fasting and prayer, in view of the prevailing drought; and appointed public service in this church. But what I wish to notice is, that the people left their farms, houses, stores, and shops, and flocked to the house of prayer. Even wicked men came, and brought their hired hands with them to attend divine service. Death, in ghastly array, stood before them and their cattle, making them willing, and then they could find time enough to come out and join with us in the solemn services of the sanctuary. This circumstance proves that ungodly men have some confidence in prayer. In fact, there is scarcely a sane man to be found, who, when in distress or threatened with calamity, does not wish to have an interest in the prayers of God's people. I have now in mind another melancholy illustration of this truth. While stationed on the island, the enemies of religion sought to injure the cause of Methodism by circulating reports derogatory to the character of the preacher; and none were fonder of the ridicule heaped upon him, or took more delight in bespattering his reputation than a certain lawyer, who often made himself and others merry by repeating silly tales hatched up for the purpose. But he was suddenly attacked with hemorrhage of the lungs—then he immediately sent for me to come and pray for him! I went in haste, and found him in great distress of mind. Every lineament of his face bespoke the deep agony of his soul. I prayed for him, and urged him to pray for



himself. He replied that he prayed every breath that God would have mercy on him a sinner; but after a few hours, he died, and I attended his funeral. Men can easily make light of religion, while in health and prosperity, but when eternity presses upon their view, if they have their senses, they will want Christians to counsel and pray with them. Pause, reader, and think of this; delay not to make thy peace with God while life and health are afforded thee, lest thou also be brought to lie upon a bed of death, and feel those bitter pangs of remorse which will follow abused mercies.

The year was, at length, drawing to a close—and our last quarterly meeting was postponed a little, so as to fix it upon a time when we could secure the services of brethren on their way to conference. By this arrangement, we enjoyed the presence and labors of Revs. D. Ostrander, Dr. Bangs, S. Merwin, P. P. Sanford, and other worthy men of God. Brother Sanford preached on Saturday, and at night we had a prayer meeting. This was our invariable custom, no matter how many preachers were present, whether strangers or not. On Sabbath morning, Dr. Bangs conducted the love-feast exercises; and a feast of love it was. While preachers and members sketched their experience, the heavenly fire burned within us. We then repaired to the grove, and brother Ostrander preached a powerful sermon; this was followed by a stirring exhortation from brother Merwin, under which the power of God fell upon the assembly like

successive shocks of electricity. The moving eloquence of the speaker enchained the large audience, and swept like a resistless tide, overwhelming all in its course. A number of preachers sat in front of the stand, and, quick as the lightning's flash, all were at once overpowered with the revealing of the Divine glory, while the whole congregation, as if moved with one Divine impulse, quaked with silent awe before the majesty of the mighty God. The Spirit of the Lord God rested upon his servant—smote the hearts of sinners, and filled his people with rejoicing. In the afternoon, our meeting closed with the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and with it closed the labors of another conference year on Brandon circuit. That was a delightful season, and now that forty years have passed away, the remembrance is still refreshing to me.

The next morning these brethren went on to the seat of conference—Middlebury, Vermont—and the day following I was with them. This was the first time the conference was held so far north. The good people of Middlebury exerted themselves to entertain the preachers in attendance, well. Bishops M'Kendree and George were present, and we had a harmonious session. The preaching was doctrinal, practical, and instructive. Many that listened to the great and good men who preached the Gospel there, went away saying, "We never heard it on this fashion;" some said, "That was a splendid sermon;" others would say, "That's a *smart* man—but he needs indoctrin-

ating!" Bishop George preached in the Methodist Episcopal Church, on Sabbath morning—text not remembered—a most delightful sermon. His warm pathetic appeals, his wholesome Gospel truths, and his startling flights of oratory, fired every Christian heart, and held, spell-bound, his numerous auditory. But this was usual with the Bishop. He was an admirable preacher—with me, a great favorite. I would love to give the reader an idea of that sermon, but it is impossible. I would ride twenty miles, any day, to hear another like it. Its fruit will appear in the great day. Dr. Emory—subsequently bishop—preached a strong sermon in the court-house, on regeneration. Text: "Ye must be born again." Bishop M'Kendree delivered one of his smooth, melting, instructive discourses, in the Presbyterian church, from Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Every eye was fixed upon the venerable speaker, and every ear turned to catch the words as they proceeded out of his mouth. It was a noble effort, and I doubt not that much good was done.

From this conference—May, 1817—I was returned to Brandon, with brother James Cowl for my colleague. He had traveled one or two years, and was a young man of sterling worth—had a good mind—excellent constitution—was fond of study, and, I



thought, could see the doctrine of a text quicker than any man of my acquaintance. He loved to preach, and the people loved to hear him. He was, subsequently, stationed in New York city, and, finally, had charge of the Academy in Poughkeepsie. He died, some years ago, greatly lamented, but went off most triumphantly.

We were pleased to have the privilege of remaining on the circuit another year—and none the less so from the fact that we now had a new parsonage, with better accommodations for living than we had enjoyed since we commenced traveling. Myself and colleague were soon at work, preaching, and visiting from house to house, holding something like family class meetings, in which we inquired of the different persons how their souls prospered, and urged upon them the necessity of deep, uniform piety. After preaching we detained the members for class, urged them to seek for higher attainments in religion, and to be in life decidedly Methodist—that is, to live by rule or method, having every-day religion; not merely having good desires, but putting them into constant, faithful practice—“living the life they lived in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God, who loved them and gave himself for them.” We sought to instill into their minds the truth, that “Methodist” was only another name for a genuine Scriptural Christian. Although originally given in derision, it was adopted by our fathers as an honorable, expressive appellation.

We knew well that in order to have a revival, there must be hearty co-operation between the members and preachers—that strong faith must be exercised by the Church, as well as by the ministers; hence, we labored to see the Church aroused, to put on her strength, and engage with us in direct efforts for the salvation of souls. And, whenever we succeeded in inducing the membership to covenant together to pray two or three times a day for the special outpouring of the Spirit, the cause of God was seen to advance. Faith and prayer are said to constitute a lever that can turn the world upside down. This is just what we need. The moral world was inverted by sin; it has been wrong side up, to the extent that sin has prevailed, ever since the progenitors of our race ate the forbidden fruit; but, thank heaven! there is moral power in the Gospel to right it up again. Religion brings revolted man back to God, and enables him to breathe his native air. It restores to him his forfeited holiness—lights up in his soul the fire of divine love—resuscitates the dormant energies of his moral being, and constitutes him happy in the light of God's reconciled countenance. Who would not have religion! Reader, art *thou* still unconverted? Is *thy* soul destitute of spiritual life? Hast *thou* lived till this hour without God, and without hope in the world? Then make up *thy* mind *now*, that thou wilt not rest till thy soul is born anew from above. Thou art standing on dangerous ground! With every pulsation of thy heart, thou art verging to the grave!

Thou mayest now be on the trembling margin! Before thee is the yawning gulf! Beneath thy feet roll turbulent waves of dark damnation! Now, O, precious soul, think—O, think of thy danger! Look at the ceaseless flow of everlasting ages! Look out—out—out upon the limitless duration of eternity! Eternity! eternity! Think of that word! Think of night—dark, rayless, starless night—night drawn out into perpetual continuance! Night eternal, boundless, merciless, “the blackness of darkness forever!” “Canst thou dwell with everlasting burnings? Canst thou dwell with devouring fire?” Canst thou endure the gnawings of the undying worm? Then, for thy soul’s sake, make haste to Jesus, thy only Savior. Yield thy heart to him in earnest, humble, contrite prayer. Embrace, by faith, his precious promises. “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

“Believe in him who died for thee;  
And, sure as he hath died,  
Thy debt is paid, thy soul is free,  
And thou art justified.”

And now, dear reader, whosoever thou art, I lift up my heart for thee in prayer, that for Christ’s sake thou mayest be led to venture thy all on the merits of the Redeemer’s blood, and at last be saved in heaven!

Having prepared the way by visiting, the people went into the work with us heartily, and omens of good began to appear; my old friends were at their



posts, ready to stay up our hands, and encourage our hearts, and God graciously granted us a year of prosperity. At the close of my first year of this term of service, which was properly my third year, I preached a farewell sermon at Mount Holly, from these words: "Finally, brethren, farewell; be perfect, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you." On going back to that place to commence another year's labor, and thinking of this last discourse, my mind rested on the following words as an appropriate foundation for a sermon: "And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do." We had a loving, weeping time. I told them I had come to inquire after their spiritual health. I rejoiced to find them in prosperity. God was with them in deed and in truth. The young converts of the previous year stood firm, and were growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. God continued to favor us with special divine influence, so that this, too, was a blessed year for Mount Holly.

While riding to one of my appointments, I fell in company with a gentleman who had an intelligent appearance, and wishing to give our conversation a religious turn, I remarked, on passing a grove, that there was a fine representation of the human family—that there were the young, the middle-aged, and the old; that some of each class were dying, and others

rising to fill their places, etc. He responded, but gave me to understand that his religious training had been of the prevailing sort; the doctrine had been carefully instilled into his mind that God foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. I asked him if he believed that God had decreed from all eternity that he and I should ride together that day down to Bishop's Corners? He said he had not the least doubt of it. "Well, I will break that decree," said I, turning my horse. "O," said he, "God has decreed that you should go no farther." "Then I will break that decree," said I, giving my horse another turn. I now told him that my actions did not depend on God's decrees, as much as his decrees depend on my actions—not that God, or his sovereign purposes, in any wise, depend on his creatures, only that in forming decrees respecting us individually, the divine prescience does take our dispositions and conduct into the account. Looking up to me he said, "Are you not a Methodist preacher?" I answered in the affirmative, adding that I delighted in my vocation.

I relate this to show that whenever we approached persons on the subject of religion, we were met by the old stereotyped dogma of fatalism, that God foreordained whatsoever cometh to pass. This formed the rampart behind which the formal professor, the moral sinner, the vile transgressor, the ranting Deist, and the brawling Universalist, would each fortify himself for the purpose of warding off the heavy blows of Gospel truth. And how many souls have perished

in the quicksands of this monstrous error, can only be disclosed by unrolling the record of eternity! Just look at it. A man is convinced of sin, his soul mourns within him because of the wickedness of his life; from the depth of a contrite heart he exclaims, "O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" How chilling to the best feeling of his soul to be told that God foreordained whatsoever cometh to pass! How blasphemous to assure him that his sins and sorrows alike originated in the counsels of heaven! And how dreadful, how cruel to inform him that God decreed the positive, unconditional salvation of a definite number for whom the Savior died, and foreordained all the others to everlasting death! Under such teaching, how soon the temptation will arise that he is one of the reprobates! He will then begin to reason, "The Redeemer is not mine—is not any thing to me which he is not to the inhabitants of the world of despair. I am no more indebted to him—have no more right to sing redeeming love, than millions of damned spirits!" Thus the black waves of despair overwhelm his anxious soul, till, if reason be not driven from her throne, he drowns his convictions by plunging into dissipation. Numerous instances of just such fatal reasoning from the premises of this wonderful system, have actually occurred.

Toward the close of the year, brother Cowl expressed a desire that the appointing powers would send him to the hardest field of labor in the con-



ference. Said he, "I am a young man—my health is good—I am able to travel any circuit, and I want the hardest they have." This was the right spirit; it was no vaunt, put forth for effect; it was the spirit of the man; and he was accommodated—but rejoiced to labor and suffer in the cause of his Master. He humorously said there should be an exception in the rule in my behalf—that this was my fourth year on the circuit, and the people said they were just becoming acquainted with me. It is, perhaps, true that it required four years on those large circuits, to form as thorough acquaintance as preachers and people now form with each other in two years.

## CHAPTER IX.

## POWNALE CIRCUIT—TWO YEARS.

IN May, 1818, I was appointed to the Pownale circuit, with brother J. Hall for my colleague, who was a pretty fine young man. This circuit extended into three states; namely, Massachusetts, New York, and Vermont.

We lived in Hoosack, at which place were several worthy families—the Millimans, Barnums, and others. Thomas Milliman had built a house for the use of the preachers, with wood-house, barn, etc., and made a practice yearly of putting a load of hay in the barn, and pasturing the preacher's cow gratuitously. It is refreshing to record such noble acts of generosity. Other friends were kind and liberal. Our situation now was perhaps more agreeable than in any former year. We were surrounded with choice friends, had a good meeting-house, good neighborhood, and a pleasant section of country in which to travel; hence we soon felt quite at home.

One of our appointments was in Petersburg, where I was reared and converted. My father was still living, and having spoken of his opposition to Methodism, it may not be out of place to speak farther of him here. As he continued to attend the Meth-

odist meetings, his prejudices wore away, and he frequently remained with the members for class meeting—an exercise of which he soon became fond; so one day at the close of class meeting, the preacher in charge—the lamented brother Arnold—addressed the members thus: “Old brother Lewis seems to like our class meetings pretty well, so I think, brethren, I will put his name on the class-book,” and turning to him, said, “I suppose you have no objection, Deacon Lewis?” The old gentleman smiled and gave his consent. I now found him a class-leader on my circuit, in which office he continued fourteen or sixteen years, and died—permit me to say it—enjoying the confidence and esteem of a large circle of acquaintances, having lived in peace with his neighbors to the age of seventy-four or seventy-five years. He became a Methodist not only in name, but in reality, embracing the doctrines and discipline of the Church most cordially. My relatives, and other friends who had known me from childhood, received me kindly, and, perhaps through some curiosity, flocked out to my appointments. Our society in the place was good. Among the membership were four of my brothers, the oldest a local preacher. He had naturally a good mind, and was disposed to combat error wherever he found it. He had an appointment in North Adams, met with considerable opposition, but continued to expose the absurdities of particular election and reprobation, and to preach Christ crucified, till the Spirit of



God descended upon the people; then sinners were awakened and converted, and a good society was organized in the place. Wherever the doctrine of free grace is faithfully preached, whether by men of much or little learning, the ungodly will be cut to the heart and tremblingly inquire, "What must we do to be saved?" O, that God would raise up men full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and thrust them out into the field now white to the harvest! And I pray God to give me a fresh baptism of the Spirit, that, whether able to labor or not, I may feel the worth of souls lying near my heart.

In Pownal we had probably the oldest society on the circuit, and in it were some excellent members, but they had neglected to build a church, on which account we labored under great disadvantage. The opposition from other denominations was strong; yet, in the midst of surrounding difficulties, we found some prosperity, but nothing like what we might have expected in a comfortable house of worship.

We made several appointments in Williamstown, and, as usual, provoked the opposition of the "standing order." This was in Massachusetts, where the law required every man to pay a tax to the Presbyterians, unless he made affidavit that he attended divine service and paid for the support of the Gospel in some other denomination. He must procure a certificate to that effect from the preacher, and take it to the town clerk and have it recorded. This law was oppressive, and in direct contravention of that relig-

ious freedom which has always been the boast of the American people. But oppressive as it was, it was mild in comparison with what it was a few years prior to the time of which I write. Then no such certificate would be of any avail. Every man must pay to support Presbyterians, though he might belong to the Methodist, or some other evangelical Church, and in his heart detest the absurd tenets of the "five-points." On one of my visits to this place, a friend who, though brought up a Baptist, always attended our meetings, invited me home with him, when, in the course of friendly conversation, some remarks were dropped which bore against the peculiar notions promulgated by the great, and, as I trust, good John Calvin; whereupon Mr. F—— said to me, "Mr. Lewis, I heard you preach good Calvinism the other night." "Well," said I, "if you will convince me of that, I will make my confession when I come round again." "Well," said he, "you preached the doctrine of depravity as strongly as any Calvinist I ever heard!" This indicates the view others took of our theology. They labored to confound it with the Socinian Unitarianism that overran New England prior to the introduction of Methodism. They might have known better, it is true, but none are so blind as those who will not see. I informed him that we always preached depravity, but that we do not leave the sinner in his ruined condition without remedy; that after portraying his real state, we offer him the atonement and helps of divine grace flowing therefrom, so that

the responsibility of life and death rests upon the sinner, and not upon the Savior; and assured him that herein is where we differ from Calvinism, and not in the doctrine of depravity.

My friend then introduced the subject of baptism. Said he, "Mr. Lewis, if you will give me one precept or example—I will only ask one—for baptism by pouring or sprinkling in the days of the apostles, I will yield the point and never argue on the subject again." Said I, "Mr. F——, if you will give me one precept or example—I will only ask one—for baptism by immersion in the days of the apostles, I will yield the point and never argue on the subject again." I took occasion to remark, further, that we were on an equality so far as the proofs of the mode of baptism, by positive precept or example, are concerned, the facts in the case being these: "From certain facts and circumstances named in the Scriptures, the Baptists *infer* that the ordinance was administered by immersion; and from these same facts and circumstances, *we infer* that it was administered by pouring or sprinkling." This narrowing down of the issue to its proper limits is always unfavorable to the hypothesis of exclusive immersion.

Mr. F—— was a sincere friend, notwithstanding his peculiar notions of doctrine. He had been trained up in them, and all his religious feelings were associated with his early training. The views instilled into the mind in youth, are always retained with wonderful tenacity. Early prejudices exert a powerful



influence over the mind in after life, often constituting a formidable barrier in the way of advancement in the knowledge of the truth, and a fearful obstacle to progress in the experience of the Christian life. How important, then, that the first religious instruction of children be strictly evangelical!

I do not know that I missed an appointment during the year. I had some hard rides—was often much exhausted in body, had some trials of mind, but was always cheered with friendly sympathy, and was permitted to wind up my labor pleasantly, thankful to God who sustained me through the eleventh year of my itinerant life. And now the season was come for the annual greetings of brethren beloved, whose hearts beat in unison, and whose mutual attachments were warm, cordial, and lasting. No men know better how to give an affectionate, whole-souled shake of the hand, expressive of unalloyed friendship, than itinerant Methodist preachers, returning, after a year's toil, suffering, and triumph, to mingle together in the session of conference.

In May, 1819, our conference sat again in the city of New York. Going to conference then was different from what it is now. Those of us who traveled north, rode from one to three hundred miles on horseback, which brought us within fifteen or twenty miles of Troy; here we left our horses with kind friends, who took care of them, and conveyed us to Troy in wagons; then we took stage to Albany, where we clubbed together to secure a cheap passage

on a sloop. This cost \$5, if boarded, and \$2 if we boarded ourselves. We chose to supply ourselves with bread, butter, tea, sugar, crackers, etc., and thus sail for New York, boarding ourselves. "But why detail all this?" Simply to remind you, dear reader, that our manner of traveling to conference then was quite different from the commodious methods now enjoyed. The change is great, yea, glorious, and I thank God for it.

I was returned to Pownal circuit. This suited myself and family well. Brother N. Levings was my colleague. This was perhaps his second year on trial in the traveling connection. He was a most amiable, lovely young man, of strong mind, deep piety, studious, and industrious. He commanded respect wherever he went; and my opinion is that he prepared more new subjects for the pulpit than any man with whom I have been associated in the work. He was to be depended on at home or abroad, by night or by day—at all times and in all places. In the course of the year, he became deeply impressed with the necessity of a clean heart—entire sanctification. For this he sought with all the ardor of his soul, and was enabled to embrace and realize the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. After this, he appeared to move heaven and earth in his religious exercises, and I doubt not that he retained the enjoyment of perfect love to his dying hour. The reader will recollect that he died a few years ago, in the city of Cincinnati, in

the full prospect of heaven, esteemed and regretted by the whole Church. May we follow his example, as a disciple of the meek and lowly Savior, and then, like him, die in full triumph of faith!

We were soon at our work, and found my old friends still at their posts, contending for spiritual, heart-purifying religion. The Rev. D. Ostrander was our presiding elder this year. I had formerly traveled under the Revs. S. Draper and W. Anson. The former died near forty years ago, and it is probable the latter has gone to his long home before this. Our first quarterly meeting was held in Adams's Nock, Massachusetts. This was the first time brother D. Ostrander preached in that region. He was a good man, a sound theologian, and reasoned most conclusively—was rather slow in his commencement, but wound up in triumph. He would, as was once said of the Rev. Samuel Coate, when deeply engaged, stroke back his hair and preach so as to fairly make his hearers see heaven, and smell the odor of the burning pit. Lord give us more such men, whether they come fresh from the college or the field! We want men of faith and prayer, with the unction of the Holy One resting upon them, whose preaching, like Paul's, shall not be with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, that the faith of the hearers may stand not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Hitherto I have said but little of my presiding elders. This has been from no lack of esteem for the



office, or for the men who filled it; but simply because my limits would only permit a passing remark, in which the character and zeal of those laborious ministers of Christ could not be worthily exhibited. It would be a far pleasanter task to delineate the character, and detail the work of my presiding elders, were I in possession of the necessary material, than to write of myself; but in sketching these recollections of my personal experience, I have felt it necessary to avoid extended notices of others. My presiding elders have all been dear to me, without exception, and we have been sweetly united in the Gospel yoke; and I thank God that we still have such an office in the Church. I never desired any change in our Discipline on this subject. During the long and heated controversy connected with the Radical secession, not one of the proposed "reforms" seemed to my mind to promise any improvement. My motto in relation to this point has been, "Let well enough alone!" True, our circuits are cut down very small, and this could not be avoided. The circumstances of the people demanded it—but this is not a sufficient reason for changing our economy. There is as much ability on these small circuits now to meet the expenses, as there was on the large circuits of forty years ago. My heart rejoices to find our pastoral charges so compact as they are; those little fields may be cultivated well; and every true-hearted minister will find enough to do in them. Often, while traveling the large circuits

of former years, was my physical frame so fatigued that it seemed I must fall from my horse; and I am truly glad that our young men do not find it necessary to ride twenty-three miles before breakfast in order to reach their appointments. The change is grateful to every feeling of my heart. But our system is a "wheel within a wheel." Like in the clock, where every wheel is necessary to keep the correct time, all the parts of our well-adjusted itinerant plan are dependent on each other; and to remove the presiding eldership would leave the whole system of machinery in confusion. Instead of modifying the rules of the Church, so as to rid the people of paying the presiding elder, let each pastor cultivate more thoroughly the ground he occupies, especially in the way of pastoral visiting, and there will be no difficulty in supporting our whole system. Let our young men in particular seek a new baptism of the Holy Spirit, and devote themselves anew to this work, and they will contribute much more to the peace, harmony, and permanent well-being of the Church as it is, than they can possibly do by introducing innovations upon her time-honored and heaven-sanctioned usages.

But to return from this digression. The quarterly meeting mentioned was an excellent one—not that many were converted, but the Church was quickened and strengthened; and an impetus was given to the work which proved of lasting benefit to the cause of religion. New life was imparted to the membership,

who went out to different parts of the circuit animated with fresh zeal for the glory of God, and for the salvation of souls.

I stopped on one of my rounds to attend a funeral service, and heard the Rev. Mr. G—— preach from Job xiv, 10: “But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?” This was, in some respects, an extraordinary sermon. The preacher said, “We are dying, and all must die; you have the evidence before you that man dieth. Now, you can never be happy without salvation; and you can never have salvation, unless you comply with the terms of salvation. These terms are, repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. You ought to repent and believe *now*, because, first, ‘man dieth.’ You ought to repent and believe *now*, because, secondly, God commands it. You ought to repent and believe *now*, because, thirdly, you can not do it till God gives you a new heart. Now, why will you delay? I beseech you to repent and believe now, for I tell you that you never can till God gives you a new heart. In evidence of this, think how many in this place, last winter, when God was pouring out his Spirit, tried to repent and could not. Then why will you neglect to repent? for I tell you that you never can repent till God gives you a new heart!” For half an hour he kept urging his hearers to repent, and the great reason assigned was, “You never can till God gives you a new heart.” After preaching, he passed round shaking hands with



the friends, and when he came to me, we took each other by the hand, and after some conversation, I whispered to him, "You told us we should repent now, because we never can till God gives us a new heart!" Turning round, so as to face the congregation, he said in an audible voice, "I presume my congregation understood me." I replied that perhaps they did, and that I thought I likewise understood him; for I always suppose a man to mean what he says, unless he makes a slip of the tongue, which is pardonable in any one. Said he, "I presume my congregation understand the difference between natural ability and moral ability." I answered that they probably did, and that I thought I also did. Then I proceeded to address him as follows: "Now, Mr. G——, you have told us, to-day, how awfully bad you feel when you hear people talk about going to heaven by their own works. I wish to say to you that I abhor such a sentiment just as much as you do yourself; but whose doctrine is it that sends men to heaven by their own works, yours or mine? You say men have a natural ability—let them, then, exercise that natural ability, and go to heaven without any thanks to grace! What! men possess natural ability to perform the moral duties they owe to God? Every principle of philosophy stands opposed to it. If that position be correct, then the exercise of natural ability will produce a supernatural effect, and secure a supernatural result; then the effect is superior to the cause, the stream rises higher than the fountain! But we say our

'ability' is not natural, but gracious; and the improvement of a gracious ability produces a gracious result; and thus we expect heaven by grace, and not by works." "Well," said Mr. G——, "that's as good Arminianism as I have heard in a long time. But what is it that constitutes this gracious ability of which you speak?" "The quickening grace of God, sir, which affects every sinner's heart. Jesus Christ is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men; and a manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." "Well, I do not know but it may be so," said G——, "but none of the authors I have read view it in that light." "I do not know what authors you have read," said I, "but the Bible teaches the doctrine I have laid down."

Just then, an old gentleman stepped up, and, laying his hand on my shoulder, said, "Young man, you are on bad ground, and had better give it up." Said I, "You are a man of years, and ought to know." "Yes," said he, "I am an old man, and I tell you that you are on very bad ground." I told him I was willing every one should think for himself. "Yes," said he, "but do have them think right." "That's the very reason I make my plea, that men may think right," said I. The old gentleman, as if abandoning me as a hopeless reprobate, turned round, and, with cane in hand, moved for the door. I was urged to stay and preach, but it was too late in the day.

When I came round, in four weeks, a sister to the deceased brother was dead, and the friends desired me to preach the funeral sermon. This I did in the same house, and to many of the same hearers that were present on the former occasion. My text was John xii, 35: "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you."

The following method was pursued:

I. *The privilege enjoyed*: "The light is with you."

II. *The duty enjoined*: "Walk while you have the light."

III. *The consequence of neglect*: "Darkness cometh upon you."

Many in that place, afterward, professed to view the economy of grace differently from what they had done before. These incidental conversations, on doctrinal points, often led to inquiry, and resulted in removing the film of prejudice from many eyes.

The Rev. Mr. D—— now came into this neighborhood and commenced preaching, and manifested an intense desire to enlighten me in regard to baptism. When I filled my regular appointment, he was in the congregation. After service I was introduced to him, and, in less than three minutes, he introduced his favorite theme. I waived the subject then, and in a few days he met me on the street and introduced it again. At my next round, he was out to hear me, and was soon upon his old hobby. He requested me to visit him at his house—said he had some passages



in Church history he wished to read to me. I made him a call, and he was soon at work. He read of some abuses of baptism that occurred in the Church at an early period—that under certain circumstances lay members were permitted to administer it to infants.

I replied, “If the abuse of an ordinance destroys its validity, you should reject the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, for it was grossly abused in the days of St. Paul, when the Corinthians ate and drank till they were gluttonous and drunken. Now, why not reject that ordinance because of the abuses to which it has been subjected? If the abuses of infant baptism constitute a valid objection against the ordinance, the same objection holds good against the sacrament of the Lord’s supper. Now, be consistent.” Said he, “We have to go to Church history because others do, but the Bible is the only rule of faith; now give me one passage from the New Testament in favor of the baptism of infants.” “Lydia and her household were baptized,” I remarked. Said he, “Lydia was a lady of Thyatira, a seller of purple, and her household consisted of herself and some young ladies she had employed to assist her in business, and there were no infants among them.” “Well then, sir,” said I, “if these young ladies could be baptized on the faith of Lydia, as being in her employ, certainly children may be baptized on the faith of their parents; and we have no evidence that one of Lydia’s household had faith except herself.”

We had prayer together and parted; but in a

subsequent interview, Mr. D—— said he did not know that there was one Presbyterian, or one Methodist, or one Episcopalian in heaven, but he did know that there was one Baptist there. My reply was, “Baptist means baptizer, or one who baptizes, and if there is one who baptizes in heaven, he certainly must do it right; and I suggest that the next trip you make to that country, you ask the old Baptist what mode he employs, and then give it to us direct from him. This will be perfectly satisfactory to me; but it may not be to some others; for I once heard a minister assert that he would not believe that infants were proper subjects for baptism, if an angel should come down from heaven and declare that they were.”

This play upon the word “Baptist,” is a favorite employment with our immersionist friends. Some years ago, a grave divine approached a young student of divinity—now the Rev. Dr. C——, of G——, Ohio—and said, “Remember, Mr. C——, you never read in the Scriptures about John the Presbyterian, or John the Methodist, or John the Episcopalian, but you do read of John the Baptist.”

About the same time, the Rev. Mr. S—— came along and preached a sermon from, “Ye must be born again.” He treated his subject evangelically for some time, and then affirmed that “we are under obligation to do that which we can not do.” Said he, “I will give you a simile: Suppose a father directs his son to take a pitcher and bring it full

of water. The son goes, but breaks the bottom out of the pitcher. Is he not still under obligation to bring the water—to do that which he can not do?" He appealed to the prophet who said, "Ye have hewn out to yourselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water," and claimed to have proved triumphantly that "we are under obligation to do what we can not do." After the sermon, a person accosted me, wishing to know my opinion on that point. I remarked, "If you will allow it, I will make use of the same illustration: If God said to Adam, take the pitcher and get it full of water, and he broke the bottom out, Jesus Christ came and put the bottom in again, and now we are required to get water, not in the broken vessel, but in the mended pitcher; so that we are not under obligation to do what we can not do, notwithstanding our total depravity. For, depraved as we are, we have an interest in the redeeming sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which secures to us the helps of Divine grace, and capacitates us to do all the Gospel requires of us in order to salvation. Hence, if we are not saved, the fault is not in Adam, not in Christ, not in God, but in ourselves alone. God is sincere when he says he is not willing that any should perish, and that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked."

"But why record these familiar conversations?" Simply because I deem them calculated to give to a large class of readers a clearer idea of the real points in dispute between Methodists and others, than



they would obtain from the more formal statements and learned arguments of systematic theological writers; and also for the purpose of illustrating the fact that we had to contend for every inch of ground we obtained. From the dignified clergyman, the sober deacon, the loquacious squire, and the "learned" pedagogue, we met with vehement opposition. Preachers of other denominations labored assiduously to make the people believe our doctrines were anti-scriptural and pernicious. Hence, we often found it necessary to vindicate our positions from the misconceptions, misrepresentations, and perversions of others, both in public and in private. These incidents show the kind of arguments brought against us, and to what depths of absurdity men will plunge, and with what unaccountable tenacity they will cling to an exploded subterfuge, rather than yield a favorite dogma.

We held a camp meeting, this year, near to our own residence. We built a tent, and the whole family went upon the ground. 'Here we labored and pleaded for the conversion of our children, and of our neighbors' children. We enjoyed some gracious influence, but not to the extent we had on other occasions. The Church was much blessed, and some souls were converted. We returned home, and that night had a prayer meeting. Now the power of God came down upon us like the rushing of a mighty wind; sinners were cut to the heart and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Among

the number was my own son, a boy of eleven years. He bowed at the altar of prayer, and while I was pleading in his behalf, in the name of Jesus, God in mercy smiled, took his feet out of the miry clay, set them upon a rock, and put a new song into his mouth, even praise to God and the Lamb! Once more I say, thank God for camp meetings!\* This son—Calvin Wesley—afterward became a preacher; and while on the Jacksonville circuit, Illinois conference, he passed away from earth. Some eight or ten ministers, of different denominations, have since told me that his was the most triumphant death they ever witnessed. Thy will, O God, be done!

“O may I triumph so,  
When all my warfare’s past;  
And, dying, find my latest foe  
Under my feet at last.”

Sometimes, when camp meetings close without many conversions or accessions to the Church on the ground, the fruit will be seen after many days. It was so here. Many souls were subsequently gathered into the fold, as the result of this camp meeting effort, and the Church was built up and made strong in the Lord. God’s name be praised! The remembrance of those days makes my heart

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\* He subsequently fell into a lukewarm or backslidden state, from which he was reclaimed in a remarkable manner. After he commenced preaching, he usually, in relating his experience, began at the period of his reclamation. Those who have heard him will hereby understand the cause of any discrepancy between the above statement of his conversion, and his experience as related by himself.

glad. God was with me then, and he still permits me to feel that I have a home in heaven. There all the ship's company shall meet, freed from the imperfections of this mortal state.

"No slightest touch of pain,  
Nor sorrow's least alloy,  
Can violate our rest, or stain  
Our purity of joy :  
In that eternal day,  
No clouds or tempests rise ;  
There gushing tears are wiped away  
Forever from our eyes."

Time rolled on and brought another year's labor to a close. During this second year, the people generally, by their hospitality, kindness, and undissembled friendship, endeared themselves to my heart in such a manner as to cause me then to feel that I should never forget them; and now I find real delight in thinking of them, and of the many happy seasons we enjoyed together on Pownal circuit. We may meet no more on earth, but—

"E'en now, by faith, we join our hands  
With those that went before ;  
And greet the blood-besprinkled bands  
On the eternal shore."



## CHAPTER X.

## CAMBRIDGE CIRCUIT—FIRST YEAR.

FROM the conference of 1820, my appointment was to Cambridge circuit, which gave us a move of only about twelve miles. Here we found a fine little house built for the accommodation of the preacher's family, but there was no barn. I drew up a subscription paper and circulated it, telling the people I would pay half as much as any one for the purpose of building a barn, and, with this proposition acting as a stimulus, the necessary sum was procured, and the barn and carriage-house soon erected and occupied.

This was a delightful section of country, and a warm-hearted, Christian people. Many of the members were from Ireland, among whom was father Baker, who had heard Mr. Wesley preach. These Irish brethren received me with great cordiality, while those born in America were not behind them in the warmth of their friendly greetings. In a word, the membership welcomed me to the circuit in such a manner as to make me feel that, though among strangers, I was surrounded with friends and brethren in Christ. The following remark in reference to this circuit, was made by Bishop Hedding, and is found in Dr. Clark's "Life and Times" of that excel-

lent man: "If we were wanting proof that Methodism is the child of God, and that it has received the fostering care of the great Head of the Church, we need look no further for a confirmation of these facts than to its rise and progress within the bounds of what was formerly Cambridge circuit. The state of the Church in all this region in 1801, with its two meeting-houses, scattered population, and scanty membership, forms a striking contrast with the state of the Methodist Church here in 1849. Thriving villages have sprung up in the place of the lowly farm-house; stately houses instead of lowly dwellings where we used to congregate; the 'tens' of God's worshipers have been multiplied into 'thousands;' so that we can but exclaim of a truth, 'The wilderness and solitary place has been made glad, the desert has rejoiced and blossomed as the rose!'"

The Bishop contrasts the state of the Church in 1801, with what it was in 1849. My period of labor there, beginning in 1820, transpired between those two points; and I presume the changes which have occurred in that region since my day there, are fully equal to those which occurred between 1801, and the time of my commencement on the circuit. It will be perceived, therefore, that it was not strictly pioneer work when I was there, nor had Methodism attained any thing like the maturity, the position, and influence which it now has.

Father Baker, above alluded to, had been class-leader for perhaps forty years, in Ireland and

America, and was truly an "old-fashioned Methodist." He possessed a strong mind, was deeply pious, and the society looked up to him for counsel, as to a father. As a leader, he was somewhat strict—insisting that Methodists ought to live by rule, both in respect to worshiping God and sustaining the Church. Take a specimen: One day, at the close of class meeting, he said, "Now, brethren, we will attend to our quarterly collection. Brother N——, come forward and call the list of names." Brother N—— called over the list of names, as they stood on the class-book, and the members came forward as their names were called, and laid the money on the table, and the amount each one paid was credited opposite his or her name. Some who were not able to be present, knowing it to be collection-day, sent in their contributions by others, that they might not be delinquent. That class was rightly trained, and every thing went on like clock-work. *There were no deficiencies there!* This old brother collected quarterage on the right plan, at the proper time, and with the least possible trouble.

My colleague—D. J. Wright—and myself went immediately to our work, and, on the first round, my mind was assailed with the temptation that I was never called to preach—which temptation pursued me, day and night, for six weeks. During this period, I could find no comfort except in the act of preaching, and, even then, the impression would sometimes become so strong as to drive away the train of thought



I desired to dwell upon. The experience was painful, but it led me to inquire, carefully, as to the design of Providence in permitting it, and to review, minutely, my past experience.

Some twelve or fifteen years prior to this, I thought I experienced the blessing of perfect love; but now I doubted, and the more I examined the subject the more I doubted, till my mind became satisfied that I did not enjoy that great blessing. With this conclusion came a deep conviction of my need of holiness. Past experience and present attainments were all insufficient. Nothing was now so desirable as the image of God. An earnest struggle for full redemption, in the blood of the Lamb, ensued. This was, in some respects, the most interesting period of my life. God was leading me by a way that I knew not, and conducting my soul to richer feasts and purer delights than I could possibly have anticipated. It was like the yielding of winter's dreary reign, before the balmy breath of opening spring. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

I was under conviction; but this was as different from my first conviction of sin and need of pardon as light from darkness. That was accompanied by a consciousness of guilt and condemnation—a dread of divine wrath and fear of hell; but this was accom-

panied by the most pleasing train of thought that could enter the mind: it was a simple discovery of holiness as an experience desirable in itself. It was a clear apprehension of the blessedness arising from an all-pervading faith and zeal for the glory of God, delivering my soul from backwardness of duty; the discovery of the nearer approach to God as a privilege secured permanently through the blood of the everlasting covenant. My mind was impressed that the more I was made like God, the more pleasing I should be to him, the more useful in the Church and in the world, as well as the more happy in my own soul.

About this time, a pamphlet on sanctification fell into my hands, which assisted me not a little. In perusing it, I was instructed and encouraged to seek, expecting to find this high and holy experience. On Tuesdays and Fridays I fasted till three o'clock in the afternoon, bending all the energy of my soul to the work of seeking a clean heart, often quoting the poet—

“With me, I know, I feel, thou art;  
But this can not suffice,  
Unless thou plantest in my heart  
A constant paradise.  
My earth thou wat’rest from on high,  
But make it all a pool:  
Spring up, O Well, I ever cry;  
Spring up within my soul.”

“My earth thou wat’rest!” I felt it so; but this did not meet the urgent want of my soul. Small

rivulets in the desert refresh the weary traveler, and fertilize the little margin along their courses, but do not render the whole land fruitful, causing it to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Thus my heart was kept alive, but not filled to overflowing with the living water, and my cry was, "O make it all a pool!" I wished to plunge beneath the purple flood, and be made every whit whole. My enjoyments were increasing; I was approaching nearer and still nearer the Divine likeness, but felt that the end of Christ's death for me was not yet attained; I was not filled with all the fullness of God. My most absorbing desire was to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness. As the hart panteth after the cooling water-brook, so panted my soul after the living God. But in vain would I attempt to describe the longing of my soul for the mind that was in Christ Jesus my Lord. Fully did I realize the sentiment of the poet—

"O'erwhelmed with thy stupendous grace,  
I shall not in thy presence move;  
But breathe unutterable praise,  
And rapt'rous awe, and silent love.  
Then every murm'ring thought, and vain,  
Expires, in sweet confusion lost:  
I can not of my cross complain—  
I can not of my goodness boast.  
Pardon'd for all that I have done,  
My mouth as in the dust I hide;  
And glory give to God alone—  
My God in Jesus pacified."

In the strength of grace, I purposed to be satisfied with nothing short of entire consecration to God.



At home or abroad, in the sanctuary or by the way-side, in public or private, the aspirations of my heart went up to heaven, often embodied in lines like these :

“Suffer’d no more to rove  
O’er all the earth abroad,  
Arrest the pris’ner of thy love,  
And shut me up in God.”

Then would follow ejaculations such as the following : “ Lord, thou knowest that I desire to be shut up in thee ! ” “ I would be thine—wholly thine, lost and swallowed up in thee ! ” “ O Lord, arrest my wandering heart ; settle and fix my wavering soul ; make me daily the prisoner of thy love ! ” While drawn out in solemn, ardent prayer, I was favored with such power with God as I had never before experienced.

For about four weeks, I continued seeking the priceless pearl—redemption from all sin—when I went to Fort Edward, and preached with much freedom and spiritual comfort. Every breath was fraught with prayer to God for the fullness of his love, without which my anxious soul could not rest. After preaching, in company with others, I went home with a friend, and, though the brethren conversed freely, I said but little ; my mind was too deeply engaged in communion with my heavenly Father. We had family worship, the friends left, the family retired, leaving me alone to meditate and pray. I slept but little, that night—not that I had pain or guilt of mind—but,

O, the burning desire, to be made holy in heart and life! Morning came—I rose from my bed—fell upon my knees and found my Savior near—more gloriously near than ever before; yet the blessing, so ardently desired, was not realized. Breakfast being over, I started for Sandy Hill; there I called at brother Clark's—went into a bedroom for secret devotion—fell upon my knees at the bedside, and poured forth my soul in prayer for a clean heart. I wrestled with God, Jacob-like—I say it with humility—and, while engaged in prayer, Satan tempted me, as he had often done before, with such thoughts as these: “Now you may as well give it up—there is no such blessing attainable—all that have professed it have been deceived—if there were any such blessing for you, it would certainly have been bestowed before this time—here you have been fasting and praying earnestly for it these four long weeks, and, certainly, it can not be that so high a state in grace is attainable.” But, then, the thought occurred to me, “This is surely a temptation;” so I resisted the subtile reasoning of the adversary—giving it not a moment's lodgment in my mind, and continued the struggle for full salvation. Faith prevailed! Suddenly the Holy Ghost descended, filling my soul with heavenly rapture. O, the light, the peace, the melting joy which overpowered my heart! I felt the saving power of the all-cleansing blood, and my whole frame was affected to trembling. Had I an angel's tongue, I could not be able to describe the blissful emotions

that thrilled all my powers. Truly the words of my Savior were fulfilled, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." On leaving that room, I learned, to my astonishment, that half an hour had passed away. I could not have thought it over five or six minutes. In the fervor of my pleadings with God, and in the rich communings of my spirit with heaven, all consciousness of passing time was obliterated from my mind.

Yes, I proclaim it with humility—my heart was made clean. This is no fiction. "God is love: and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth, is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us." I was now better than ever prepared to do and suffer the will of God, for I knew something of what it was to be "filled with all the fullness of God;" and I now say it to the praise of the glory of his grace, that, for years, without interruption, I could sing—

"All praise to the Lamb! accepted I am,  
Through faith in the Savior's adorable name:  
In him I confide, his blood is applied;  
For me he hath suffer'd, for me he hath died.  
Not a doubt doth arise, to darken the skies,  
Or hide, for a moment, my Lord from mine eyes:  
In him I am blest; I lean on his breast,  
And, lo! in his wounds I continue to rest."



Now, dear reader, think of this high privilege. Remember that an inspired apostle prayed for it in behalf of the whole Church—yea, that Christ himself prayed for it in behalf of all true believers of every age. Believe that thou art “not called unto uncleanness, but unto holiness;” seek for it daily, purpose never to rest till thou art “saved indeed.” Fill that glass with pure water, and it will contain nothing else without displacing some of the element which first filled it; so when the heart is full of God, full of love and holiness, sin can not enter without excluding so much of the Divine presence: “For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?” But, having God filling the soul, thou mayest “walk by faith,” “seeing him who is invisible,” and keep thyself “unspotted from the world.” What else is meant by “walking in the light as he is in the light,” by having “fellowship with his Father and with his Son,” and by having “the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse from all sin”—“from all unrighteousness?” Here I lift my heart and say, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.” In order to receive these richer manifestations of the Father’s love, we must become like little children—simple-hearted,

confiding, wishing to be taught; for if we esteem ourselves "wise and prudent," these things will remain "hid from our eyes." "And if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." But if we bow submissively at the feet of Jesus, and with strong faith appropriate the death and passion of the Son of God to our own hearts, grasping the atonement as the soul's only refuge, then Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Once more I say, dear reader, seek this high privilege; make it thy one desire, aim and work to seek and find the "fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ." Live—struggle—agonize for it as for thy life! Then shalt thou not be unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, but thou shalt "bring forth those fruits which show that thy roots are in the clefts of the rock, that thy leaves are refreshed by the dews of heaven, and that thou dost bask in the sheen of an unsetting and a blessed sunshine!"

Shortly following this happy experience, I was called to pass through a sore affliction. While at a distant part of the circuit, in company with a good brother, making pastoral visits, a man from the neighborhood in which my family resided, was seen approaching, and, on seeing him, a vivid impression

seized my mind that something serious had occurred, demanding my presence at home. I expressed my apprehensions to the brother in company, remarking that, during my eleven years' itinerant life, my family had often been sick in my absence, but had never before sent for me. The man, brother F——, came up and told me that my daughter was very sick, and it was thought best that he should come for me. It was now late in the evening; we took some refreshment, and started in the night; the burden of my prayer being that myself and family might profit by the affliction, however it might terminate. Thus we passed the lonely hours and tedious miles, till about the rising of the sun, when we came in sight of the house and discovered the beds lying out, by which we knew that my dear child was gone to her long home. Upon entering the house, I found it even so; her lifeless remains were lying before me, cold, still, fast in the embrace of death! My wife, overcome with anguish, was lying on the bed; I took her hand, pressed it, wept, but could not speak. Passing into another room, I sought relief in prayer. On the wings of faith my soul went up to God, pleading that the mysterious dispensation might be overruled to his glory and our good; and I heard the responsive whisperings of his Spirit, "Thy prayers are come up before God—thou shalt be delivered." My heart was full—"unutterably full of glory and of God." Arising from my knees, I could but ex-



claim, "Lord, it is enough!" While gazing on the loved form of our child, still beautiful in death, whose silvery tones and cheerful smile so often sent sunshine into our hearts, we could say as we never before had said—

"Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,  
Take life or friends away;  
But let me find them all again  
In that eternal day."

On Saturday morning, this daughter was in good health; in the evening she was attacked with disease; and on Sunday night, she sweetly sunk into the arms of Jesus, and passed away to join the swelling throng in the paradise of God.

"The morning flowers display their sweets,  
And gay their silken leaves unfold,  
As careless of the noontide heats,  
As fearless of the evening cold.  
Nipp'd by the wind's untimely blast,  
Parch'd by the sun's directer ray,  
The momentary glories waste,  
The short-lived beauties die away."

This stroke of affliction fell heavily upon me. It then seemed to me that I should not have felt a deeper sense of bereavement, if every relative—save my companion—had been taken away: yet I was enabled to bow at the foot of the cross, and say from the heart, "Not my will, but thine, O God, be done." But the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead never appeared so precious to my soul as then. Without the blessed assurance that

even "this vile body shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ," and live again in perpetual youth, the Christian system would be radically defective, in that it would fail to meet an irrepressible desire of the human mind. But, bless God! our redemption is perfect. "He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in us."

"Those bodies that corrupted fell  
Shall incorrupt arise,  
And mortal forms shall spring to life  
Immortal in the skies."

The providence was dark, but heaven was kind; and, in reflecting on these words of our Savior, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," I felt that all was sanctified to our good.

But to return to the work of God on the circuit. I filled my appointments in regular order, enjoyed the Divine presence, and saw the powers of darkness tremble; for the word of truth, though not clothed in the tinseled garb of human rhetoric, nor spoken in enticing words of man's wisdom, was nevertheless owned of God, and made mighty through him to the pulling down of strongholds. And yet we did not have a large ingathering of souls. The revival was more within than without. Holiness of heart and life became a favorite theme for pulpit ministration, and there followed a general waking up on the subject among the membership. Many sought the fuller

baptism, and felt "the blood that cleanseth from all sin," applied by faith. My own soul was richly watered, day by day. Praise the Lord! I was permitted to enjoy communion with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The triune God was enthroned in my heart, "bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Once, sin had complete dominion in my soul; now, I felt, by sweet experience, that the tyrant was expelled by the Spirit of God, and that all my quickened powers were under the reign of grace. O, the depth of redeeming love! All I had was upon the altar of consecration; Christ was all and in all to me. Truly I could say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee!" I had often urged holiness upon my hearers as a Bible doctrine, but never till now could I pour it forth from the fountain of a full heart.

But there were enemies to this doctrine then, as now. A friend remarked, one day, after meeting, "Brother Lewis professes more than St. Paul did." This remark was based on Philippians iii, 12: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I am also apprehended of Christ Jesus." From this it is inferred that the apostle to the Gentiles repudiated the doctrine of evangelical holiness, or perfect love. But how terribly confused must be the mind that reasons thus! St. Paul was speaking



of that perfection which belongs to the resurrection of the just. Unto that perfection he had not yet attained, of course; but he immediately acknowledged himself and others perfect in another sense, in these words: "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Christian perfection, attainable in this life, is one thing; the perfection of "the spirits of just men made perfect," in the intermediate state, is another thing; and the perfection of glory, or that which belongs to the soul and body in the resurrection, is still another. But all these must be confounded in order to pour contempt upon a most precious truth, or heap odium on such as profess to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." The first, or Christian perfection, which Paul professed, and which numerous living saints enjoy, does not imply deliverance from the effects of sin, so as to restore the soul to freedom from error, and the body to exemption from death—but only that the reign of sin be destroyed, and the fruits of the Spirit brought forth to maturity. The second, or that which invests the soul upon its deliverance from the earthly tabernacle, does not include all the heights and depths of glory that pertain to the final state, but it implies freedom from the pains, foibles, and imperfections of body and mind, which are inseparable from this mortal state. These shall be thrown off—no more to mar the felicity, or interrupt the joy of the Spirit, in its communings with the fountain of life and purity. The third,

the perfection of glory, attained when the dead are raised incorruptible—the consummation of all our hopes, was the object of the apostle's earnest aspiration, when he “counted all things but loss,” sacrificed honor, ease, and pleasure, “if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” In this sense, he was “not yet perfect;” but, like a perfect Christian, he “pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

We plead not for positive perfection in this life, but for relative; not for absolutely sinless perfection, but for a perfection of “faith that works by love, and purifies the heart;” not for infallibility of judgment or action, but that the “blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” We do not expect, in this life, to love God with all the strength of unfallen Adam, nor with the fervor of sinless angels, nor yet with the intensity of translated Enoch or Elijah, nor even with the holy ardor of disembodied saints—but with all the powers of redeemed, sanctified sinners; “with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength” of fallen spirits quickened by the Holy Ghost!

“But many have professed this perfection, whose lives witnessed that they did not enjoy it.” Well, what of that? Are we to deny the doctrine on this account? Do not many profess justification, whose lives declare plainly that they are either deceived or grossly hypocritical? Shall we abandon our faith in that doctrine, because some will dishonor their profession? Never! A man in England once said he

did not believe there were fifty pounds in the kingdom. Upon being interrogated for the reason of his strange assertion, he replied that he had not one-half that amount himself! Thus, some men, who never experienced any thing of the sort themselves, blindly set up their own attainments as the standard of Christian privilege. But if we come to the word of God for light, we shall find inspired men praying for it, the provisions of the Gospel ample to warrant the expectation of it, the commands of God expressly enjoining it, and the promises teeming with encouragement to seek it. And now, dear reader, "for this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God!"

Time sped away. Another year was numbered with the past, and I was again ready to leave the field of battle for the purpose of mingling with my brethren in the labors and privileges of the annual conference. I had passed through some of the severest mental conflicts of my life, but, through the rich mercy of God, the close of that year was hap-



pier than all the past. God was the strength and refuge of my soul. My labors being closed, I bowed upon my knees and poured out my soul to God in gratitude and praise—committed my flock to the protection of heaven, prayed that God would direct in the appointment of preachers to this field, and that the year to come might be more abundantly prosperous than the year past. And now to the praise of my Redeemer, I will again record the fact that in the year of our Lord, 1820, on Cambridge circuit, my soul was made perfect in love. “My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord; and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.” Amen.

## CHAPTER XI.

## CAMBRIDGE CIRCUIT—SECOND YEAR.

FROM the conference of May, 1821, I was returned to Cambridge circuit, and was shortly in the midst of my old friends, the press of whose hands bade me welcome to the field of toil and triumph. My sincere prayer to God was, that I might be more useful than the previous year. The conference sent me no colleague, but there was a young man employed, who, though inexperienced, preached well for his years, was a good man, and well received. But the principal part of the labor devolved on me. When our doctrines and usages were assailed, I must be found in the front of the battle, warding off the missiles of error, by wielding the sword of the Spirit.

At their ordination, Methodist preachers promise to be diligent in banishing "all strange and false doctrines," and never did I suppose that in "contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," the minister of the cross necessarily departs from his appropriate business of preaching "Christ crucified." I could have no sympathy with that sickly, fawning spirit that smiles upon error as an innocent foible, permitting it to pass unrebuked, under pretense of avoiding contention and promoting

peace in the Church. The motive may be laudable, but the means are to be detested. Our fathers, the pioneers of Methodism, never sought the good-will of the world, or to conciliate the favor of the "standing order," by conniving at heresy; nor did they think themselves "contentious" when laying bare the stupendous errors which they found labeled with Scripture names, and incorporated into creeds and confessions, in lieu of the sublime doctrines of Gospel truth. Had they refused to stand up in defense of the doctrines they avowed, or cowered before the haughty bearing of their "learned" opponents, defeat and not success would have marked their career, and the glorious triumphs of Methodism would never have been written. The mountains of bigotry, prejudice, and ignorance, cleaved asunder by these dauntless heralds of salvation, would never have fallen before the "modest" labors of pedantic time-servers. Their brilliant achievements stand out in bold relief, proving that they were no truckling cravens, seeking to establish dogmas which they were unwilling to submit to the crucible of enlightened controversy. But notwithstanding the boldness and fidelity of the fathers, and their great success in refuting error, and in expounding the doctrines of the Bible, so inveterate was the prejudice of other denominations, that they had not yet learned, or would not acknowledge the true character of our theology. Even so late as 1821, any number of false notions prevailed in reference to our doctrines and



usages. In the bounds of Cambridge circuit, were Burgers and Anti-Burgers, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Baptists—all affirming that Methodism was “Arminian stuff.” Scarcely ever looking into our standard books, they contented themselves with setting up and beating down, “a man of straw.” Had I refused to labor in public and private to counteract these errors, and to make known, “with all plainness of speech,” the distinguishing doctrines of the Church, I should have proved recreant to the trust committed to my charge. But believing that Methodism was a revival of primitive, Scriptural Christianity, I ceased not to insist that the distinctive features thereof were fully sustained by the Bible—“The only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice.”

These efforts were not altogether unavailing. Some were induced to “search the Scriptures,” like the Bereans of old, “to see whether these things were so.” And God was pleased to raise up for us champions for the truth, able to vindicate their faith, and to defend the usages of the Church against her most wily adversaries. An old gentleman of the name of King, who was raised among the Burgers, the most rigid Calvinists in the country, borrowed some Methodist books, and, after reading for a short time, found his prejudices giving way. He became anxious to hear for himself, came out to preaching, and listened with intense interest; the word fastened upon his heart, and he went home determined to see

whether the Bible did warrant the new doctrine. Searching the Scriptures carefully, with his mind, in a good measure, freed from the fetters of prejudice, he was not long in discovering that his old creed was no part of the Gospel of Christ. Possessing the spirit which prompts men to act upon their own convictions, he at once embraced the truth, "in the love of it," and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. Of course, a storm of persecution followed; his own family and friends denounced his course, pouring out torrents of indignation—but his position was chosen deliberately, and he stood firm. The whole community seemed arrayed against him; the labors of the minister were brought into requisition, and all possible efforts made to bring him back to the "faith of the fathers"—but every thing proved unavailing. He read Fletcher's Checks, and other works, storing his mind with arguments, and proved more than equal to the best of his opposers.

On public occasions—days of town meetings, etc.—the minister would attack brother King in company—perhaps with a view of convincing others that Methodism was false—at all events, he seemed to take pleasure in disputing with him when others would listen. On one of these occasions, some remarks were made on a disputed point, when brother K. asked, "Is it reasonable?" Thereupon, the minister exclaimed, "What has reason to do with faith!" Brother K. replied, "God made promise to Abraham, that he should have a son in his old age—that

his seed should be numerous as the stars, etc.; all this might look unreasonable to Abraham, but he looked up to heaven, and saw the sun shining in his strength—remembered the twinkling of the stars by night—thought of his past mercies and goodness, and then reasoned, He who made all these things, whose wisdom and power clothed them with light, beauty, and harmony, can fulfill his own word; and, while looking upon these witnesses of God's perfection, 'Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.' Thus, sir, we see what reason has to do with faith."

Yes, reader, here is the way to believe the tenets of Calvinism: just stifle the intuitive convictions of right, as they spring up in your soul, put out the eyes of common sense, shut off the light of heaven, and dogmatically exclaim, "What has reason to do with faith!"

One day brother King went to Judge R——, carrying with him a copy of the life of Wesley, and said to him, "Judge, here is a book, which, if you will read it, will leave its tracks behind it; however, if it does, you will, perhaps, never tell me, as you know the tongue can be made to do as you please." The Judge took the book, promising to read it. Some time afterward, brother K. went over to see the Judge, and found him in the field. After the usual civilities, the Judge said, "Well, Mr. King, do you remember what you said about that book?" Brother K. replied, "I remember it very well."



"And it does leave its tracks behind it," said the Judge.

*K.* "I knew it would do that, but I thought, probably, you would never tell me about it."

*Judge.* "What a wonderful man Mr. Wesley was!"

*K.* "He was truly a wonderful man."

*Judge.* "And now I want to hear some of these Methodists preach; I want to hear for myself."

*K.* "One of them will preach to-morrow, at Mr. D——'s, and you must go and hear for yourself."

*Judge.* "O, I can't go then, but I will go soon."

*K.* "If you do not go to-morrow, perhaps you will never go."

*Judge.* "Well, really, I can not stop my team."

*K.* "I shall be going, and I will come and take you."

*Judge.* "Then I will go with you."

Brother King was so pleased that he rode all the way up to D——'s, six miles, just to tell him that Judge R—— was going to attend Methodist meeting the next day. I happened to be there, and heard him relate the conversations which had passed between them. Said he to me, "Now, brother Lewis, you know that Calvin taught that God works righteousness in the righteous, and wickedness in the wicked; but our Savior says the good man sowed the good seed, and the devil sowed the tares. Now, brother, not that I wish to teach you how to preach, but if you could touch upon these points in a natural

way, it seems to me that good might result from it." Brother K. left, and returned the next day in company with his friend, the Judge. This was the first time Judge R—— ever heard a Methodist sermon. He remained for class, after which we had a long conversation. He was much surprised on being told that we believed all infants, dying in infancy, would be saved. He had been taught that if both parents were pious, the child would be saved; if one was pious and belonged to the Church, there was some hope; but if both the parents were wicked, neither of them belonging to the Church, there was no hope: the child of such parents, dying out of the Church, was surely a reprobate, and would perish forever! I explained to him that no infants were saved because their parents were pious, but because Christ redeemed them by his blood, and saved them from the curse of the law. He raised many objections, which I answered as plainly as I could, and after conversing freely together, we parted with the best of feeling. Shortly after this, the Judge said to brother King, "I have been thinking over what the minister said, the other day, about infants being saved, and the more I think of it, the more reasonable it appears." "Yes," said brother K., "it is certainly the Bible doctrine."

It was not long till the Judge, in company with brother King, attended one of our quarterly meetings. We had, as usual, prayer meeting at night, family worship where we lodged, and then the Judge observed that most of us, before retiring to rest,

bowed the knee in secret devotion. He remarked, in surprise, that these men prayed more than any people he had ever known. Said he to brother King, "Only think of it: they had prayer meeting, prayed again in the family, and then prayed in secret before going to bed!" The Church members with whom the Judge had been associated, thought they were sufficiently pious if they prayed once in a week, or once in a month. He continued to attend our meetings, and finally joined the Church, and became a warm-hearted Christian and a happy man.

At one appointment on this circuit, there lived several men of skeptical sentiments, with considerable wealth and refinement, whose wives belonged to the Church, and were seldom absent from divine worship, although the preaching was on week-day. Sometimes their husbands would accompany them, and invite me home with them. I would generally accept the invitation; and, though they had no confidence in the divinity of our faith, they would treat me well, so that I felt quite at home beneath their roofs. Some men are amiable in spite of the corrupting tendency of their mental convictions. The refining principles of Christianity mold their hearts, while the evidences of the heavenly origin of the system fail to command the assent of their minds. My association with these men was most agreeable, and I remember their hospitality with pleasurable emotions. One of them once expressed to me his doubts of the inspiration of the Scriptures; there-



upon I immediately called his attention to Zechariah ix, 9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." I first dwelt upon the time intervening between the declarations made in the text, and their alleged fulfillment. The prophet wrote some five hundred and eighty-seven years before the birth of Christ, and yet he clearly discovered the Son of David making his noted entry into Jerusalem; he described the beast he rode, the multitudes accompanying him, and heard their triumphant shouts of "Hosannah in the highest!" My remarks were extended to considerable length. Then, after a time spent in silence, my friend responded, that we want preachers to marry us and to bury our dead, and that he believed the preaching was useful; that it tended to correct improper habits, improve the morals of society, etc.

Here is one of the strange incongruities of the unbelieving. They admit that the Gospel is useful—that it makes men better—that it improves the morals and promotes the general well-being of society, and, when their friends are dying or dead, they want its consolations; but still they insist that it is not divine, and therefore must be the mightiest fraud ever palmed upon the world! But notwithstanding the inconsistency of their course, these were special friends of mine, and I believe they

were more liberal in furnishing their wives with money for the support of the Gospel, than any men in the range of my acquaintance. Often did my prayer ascend to heaven for their conversion; and I humbly trust that, ere this, the Gospel which they at the same time esteemed and denied, has become the power of God unto their salvation.

In the town of M——, I was permitted to preach two discourses in the Baptist Church. In the first, I endeavored to set forth the absurdity of flattering ourselves that we are Christians, while remaining destitute of the Scriptural marks of discipleship. At the close, a gentleman approached me and commenced advocating the doctrine, "Once in grace, always in grace." By way of illustration, he said, "You know we sometimes cover up our fire in the evening before we retire, and when we get up in the morning we see no signs of fire till we rake over the ashes—then we find here and there a spark that may be brought together and kindled." "Yes," said I, "and very often, after raking the ashes most diligently, we find *that it has all gone out!*" After the second sermon, the gentleman came forward again, and put to me what he evidently considered a "stumper" of a question. Said he, "Mr. Lewis, when a man is converted he receives something, does he not?" My answer was in the affirmative. "Now, then," said he, "when a man falls from grace, what becomes of that something?" I assured him that God could withdraw

his grace from any that would abuse it, referring him to the case of the man who refused to improve the one talent, and the command to take it from him and give it to him that had ten.

Some time after this, I fell in company with the Baptist minister. He also introduced the subject, and attempted to vindicate the notion of unconditional perseverance. He based his argument on the parable of the leaven hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened. Said he, "Did you ever know leaven placed in meal that failed to produce its proper effect?" I told him I had known it often. "Well," said he, "has not the leaven an acting principle that is destined to work?" I admitted it; but reminded him that much depended on the condition of the meal—the temperature at which it is kept, etc. The meal must be prepared, and when the leaven is deposited, it must not be kept too hot or too cold. So with the grace of God. It must be received into the heart, and then its operation must not be resisted. The heart only comes under the assimilating influence of grace, in proportion as it yields to the demands of the Gospel. Without the concurrence of the human will, the grace of God will no more diffuse itself through the soul, transforming the affections to the likeness of God, than leaven will produce its legitimate results in meal, while kept in an atmosphere so hot or so cold as to prevent fermentation.

In attending to my regular rounds of duty on



the circuit, I still realized much of the divine presence. My communion with God was uninterrupted. I could still sing—

“Not a doubt doth arise, to darken the skies,  
Or hide for a moment my Lord from mine eyes.”

Our meetings were lively and spiritual; our class meetings, in particular, were seasons of refreshing to our souls. God was in our midst to kill and make alive, and the attention of many wanderers was turned to the things of the kingdom of God. But one great hinderance to the work of conversion was, that many thought they must make themselves better before God would accept them. This is a common error; or, I may say, a common delusion of the devil. When persons are convinced of sin, they discover their unworthiness in so startling a light that they are easily persuaded that they must not venture on Christ for salvation, till they expiate some of their own sins by repentance, reformation, prayers and tears, if not by penance; and under this specious delusion, they go about the work, only to prove the weakness of their resolutions, and the strength of the chains which bind them. Vain effort!

“If you tarry till you’re better,  
You will never come at all!”

Here I will give an incident illustrating the folly of trying to remove the malady from our own sinful

hearts. It was related by one of my Irish members on this circuit, who lived in Ireland at the time it occurred, and knew the man well. A Roman Catholic was passing down street, and, hearing singing in the Methodist chapel, he concluded to step in a few minutes, which he did, without any intention of staying; but after the preacher took his text, he soon found himself deeply interested in the discourse, and tarried till the meeting closed. The next day he went to the priest, and told him that he felt very badly. The priest, after examining him somewhat, said to him, "I know what is the matter; you have been among those Methodists, and they have made you crazy; but I can cure you." After receiving from the priest his prescription of penance, the man returned home; but after several days, he went back and said to the priest, "Indeed, sir, and I am very sick yet!" "Well," said the priest, "I can do nothing more for you; you must go to the 'old father' on the island, thirty miles distant, he can cure you. When you arrive at the island, any one can tell you where the father lives." Away went the man to the island, to see the "father." When he arrived there, the imposing mansion of the lordly priest was pointed out to him, situated on an eminence, surrounded with indications of wealth and luxury surpassing any thing to which the untutored "penitent" had been accustomed. With no little trepidation, he approached, being little less in awe of the august character of the "old father," than of the magnifi-

cence surrounding his dwelling, and with unaffected simplicity handed the old priest a written confession, which the other priest had sent—not doubting that his mysterious “sickness” would now be cured. The “old father” read the confession, looked gravely at the man, and said, “You are a desperately wicked fellow.” “Ah, sir, an’ that’s not all that I’m guilty of!” said the man. “Well, here,” said the priest, “take this crust of bread, and go over yonder on the beach, and go so many yards [I forget the number] on your bare hands and knees; eat this crust of bread, drink a little water, and you will soon become well.” He followed the prescription to the letter. He went to the beach, fell down on his hands and knees, both bare, and though the pebbles cut and mangled his flesh in a terrible manner, he went the round three times a day for three days, but found no relief. He was in great distress, and said, “What shall I do? I went to the priest, and he could do me no good; I went to the ‘old father,’ and he makes me no better; now, here I am, thirty miles from home, my hands and knees cut to a jelly, and I am yet no better; what shall I do?” He determined to get home, if possible; so he hobbled off in the night, and, after much suffering, he reached home, exhausted and full of pain. He went to bed and remained till the following morning, but could not sleep. The anguish of his mind was more intense than the pains arising from his abused limbs. That morning, he left his bed and went down into his



meadow to pray. He says, "I fell upon my knees behind a bunch of hay, and said, 'I have been to the priest, and he could not cure me; I went to the "old father," and he could do me no good; and now I am come to try what the Lord Jesus Christ can do for me.' " While thus engaged in prayer, the burden of guilt was rolled from his heart, and he was made well and happy. How true the language of Dr. Watts:

"Nor bleeding bird, nor bleeding beast,  
Nor hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,  
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,  
Can wash the dismal stain away!"

Now I wish to record the goodness of God in preserving my life, in the midst of imminent peril. I was using a remarkably skittish horse, which would be frightened at the flutter of the smallest leaf. On an extremely cold, windy day, I was driving him in a light carriage, having myself wrapped up in overcoat and cloak, with a horse-blanket gathered about my feet, to protect me from the cold, when I came to a hill with a steep descent of about the fourth of a mile. I started down, thinking that if my horse should attempt to run, I would try to run him over against a high fence, which stood to the right, when suddenly my thoughts were interrupted by the breaking of the band which held up the breeching. The harness fell, and I was at the mercy of my horse, now trembling with fright. I sprang to my feet, but found them fast in the blanket. The horse stood

trembling, till I disentangled my feet, jumped out, chocked the wheel, and readjusted the harness. My heart went up in thankfulness to God, whose restraining hand rested on that horse, and thus preserved my life. I believe not only in a general, but also in a particular providence; and I do believe that God mercifully interposed, perhaps, by sending an angel, to avert from me a fearful calamity, if not sudden death. A horse is a vain thing for safety, but salvation is of the Lord.

The year closed pleasantly. God sustained me by his grace, and we felt grateful to him for all the mercies of the year. I look back to the two years spent on Cambridge circuit, with more than ordinary interest. The scenes, the associations, the labors, and, especially the experience of the divine fullness which I there first realized, are among my most cherished recollections. But many who were then my associates, with whom I took sweet counsel, and in whose company I went to the house of God, have entered the upper glory, and are now tuning their harps in the presence of the Lamb. May I meet them all in heaven!

“They mark’d the footsteps that he trod;  
His zeal inspired their breast;  
And, foll’wing their incarnate God,  
Possess the promised rest.”

## CHAPTER XII.

## BERN CIRCUIT—TWO YEARS.

MAY, 1822, our conference sat in the city of New York. At the close of a very pleasant session, I received my appointment to Bern circuit, on the western side of the Hudson. This was very unexpected to me. I had generally taken the whole ground; indeed, I had traveled every circuit from Lower Canada down to Massachusetts; and, in going to Bern circuit, I had to pass through one of the finest fields of labor in the whole conference, where there were two parsonages, and the people fully able to support two married preachers. There was no preacher's house on the circuit to which I was sent, and I had a married man for my colleague—the Rev. H. Ames—a blessed good man, who could pray and exhort so as to make the sinners tremble. This was the first time I felt dissatisfied with my appointment. Before conference, the presiding elder said to me, he did not know what he should do for Bern circuit; that the ministerial labor had been inefficient, and the work was running down; but I did not suspect that he was putting out a “feeler.” My health was poor, and the country was exceedingly rough; so I felt



very much aggrieved at being sent there. I besought the elder and the bishop for a change, but all to no purpose; this, and only this, was to be my field of toil for the coming year, and the sequel will show how unreasonable it is to murmur at the allotments of Providence.

Having completed my two years at Cambridge, I had made my arrangements for moving before setting out for conference, and, on my return, found every thing ready for loading up, so that the Saturday following the close of conference, brought us safely to our field of labor. The distance to conference was two hundred miles, and the move from the old to the new circuit, from fifty to sixty. On Sabbath, I preached my first sermon in a very filthy house; but we soon had it renovated, and also engaged part of an unfinished building for sheltering my family. This house stood in a retired place, with no water there that was fit for drinking or washing; and Methodist preachers know something of the need of such accommodation as good washing facilities afford, after a long move; but, Providence came to our relief, and sent down refreshing showers, from his own reservoir; and, by putting out numerous vessels, we were soon supplied with the element so indispensable to cleanliness.

I soon set out for the lower end of my charge, and, at Rensselaerville, learned that a comfortable house could be obtained, with good water privileges. This was an extreme point on the circuit, and, if my family

lived there, I should have to be absent from them most of the time ; but as it seemed the only point at which comfortable quarters could be had, I determined to accept the kind offer of some of the brethren to move us, as soon as the demands of the work would allow me a few days to myself. Before I made the first round, the work of the Lord broke out gloriously at one point, and I told my wife that we were in the right place ; that I now felt satisfied we should enjoy ourselves better than if we had gone to the circuit we desired. I also told her, that, though we did not live in elegantly-furnished rooms, and walk upon Turkey-carpets, we could have a comfortable house, with all necessary conveniences, and a good school for our children. Although it had always been severely trying to Mrs. L. to pack up and move, she went at it, this time, with pleasure, and we were soon in the little village, feeling quite at home.

The presiding elder's remarks before conference, in reference to ministerial inefficiency, were now forcibly brought to mind. At many points on the circuit the class-books had not been marked for twelve months ; class meetings were slimly attended, and, of course, a general prostration of religious interest was the consequence ; for whatever other denominations may do, experience and observation teach me that unless class meetings are kept up, Methodist societies will dwindle and die. Some of our societies were ripe for reformation or destruction ; and with this impression distinct in my mind, I commenced revising the class-

books, visiting the leaders and members, and urging upon all the necessity of attending the means of grace. After preaching, I would request *all* the members to stay for class, and then exhort them to faithfulness, warning the delinquents that if they persisted in neglect of duty they must be brought before the society and laid aside for breach of rule.

God blessed our feeble efforts and poured out the Spirit from on high, making the wilderness to become a fruitful field. We were soon in the midst of a powerful revival of religion. Rocks, hills, and valleys were no longer dreaded; rough places were made smooth, crooked places were made straight, hills were brought down and valleys were exalted before the Lord; for he rained righteousness upon us. This mighty baptism of the Spirit seemed to renew the face of earth, overspreading the landscape with a mantle of light. "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."

We now established a new appointment in Middletown, where we met with great opposition. Some of the "standing order" raised the hue and cry against us, as if we had been the veritable wolves in sheep's clothing. The minister, who had not been in the neighborhood for perhaps six months, came and stuck to them like a brother—laboring, night after night, warning the people against our encroachments, and



telling them that we preached most dangerous doctrine! And it did sometimes seem that a plain, Methodist, Gospel sermon, was like a bomb-shell among Calvinistic refinements.

Once, when I came to this point, and learned what a dust had been raised, I alluded to the subject in a short speech, something after this fashion: "It appears to me, that those who believe God has fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass, so that not the smallest event can possibly occur otherwise than as he has decreed, ought in all candor to be careful how they oppose Methodism, lest they be found fighting against God; for if that doctrine be true, God has decreed that there should be just so many Presbyterians, so many Baptists, and so many Methodists, and it is impossible that there should be any more or any less of either than he has particularly and unchangeably designed. And if this doctrine be true, God has decreed, from all eternity, that there should be a little man named David Lewis; that he should be a Methodist preacher; that he should preach just such doctrines in Middletown as he has preached; that just so many should believe them, and so many should not; and he has moreover decreed, that if people will dislike it, get mad and scold about the new doctrine, this same David Lewis should be perfectly unconcerned, so Christ is preached, sinners converted, and the name of the Lord glorified."

Notwithstanding the outcry against us, the Lord favored us with his rich grace, and a fine revival

ensued. A Church was organized, and we soon had a flourishing society, the members of one heart and one soul, pulling sweetly together in the Gospel yoke. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

A brother in this place had a pair of twin-boys, active, bright, good scholars for their age. What was singular about them was, that one of them would pick up a book, and if it happened wrong end up, he would read with the greatest fluency; it seemingly making no difference which way the book was held, or whether he read backward or forward. I should like much to know what has become of those fine little boys.

We had an appointment in Schoharie, the county-seat. Some years before, this place was noted for wickedness. It was considered rather unsafe for a preacher to pass through the town. But there was a man of the name of Stots, noted for pugilistic accomplishments, who became soundly converted, and the fighting propensity all taken out of his heart. After this, he became the stanch friend of the preachers, and the people were mostly afraid of him. He was in the habit of accompanying the preachers through this place, as a sort of body-guard, to their next appointment beyond; but in my day here, outward opposition of this kind had pretty much ceased. I found living here an excellent local preacher, of the

name of Wate. Many a happy night did I spend with him and his pious family.

Finally, I will say that we were blessed with a general revival throughout the circuit; and rough and forbidding as the country seemed in the start, I closed up the year's labor happy in the Savior, and having no desire to move to another field. I still felt an indwelling God. Blessed be his holy name! "O, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

This year, I received my whole quarterage claim, and seventeen or twenty dollars for table expenses; paid my own house-rent, but received more than any previous year in the New York conference. Having made new class-books, and attended to the various concerns of the circuit, I left for the seat of conference, where I was permitted to renew many happy acquaintances with brethren in the ministry. We greeted each other in the name of our common Lord, and talked over the labors, sufferings, and success of the past year, and rejoiced together in hope of "the common salvation."

In 1823, our conference sat in ——. Bishop George presiding. For the first time in my life, I now made some remarks relative to my appointment, which the Bishop readily understood. Said he, "You do not wish to move." Said I, "You crowded me there, and now I do not want you to snatch me away." I was returned to Bern circuit,



which was satisfactory, so far as I know, to all concerned. The Church was in a healthy state, the membership generally disposed to commence anew the divine life, giving themselves up more fully to the service of God; but new obstacles to the advancement of truth were preparing for us. A Mr. S——, a preacher of Unitarianism, of the order called New-Lights, now known as Bible Christians, began preaching some twelve or fourteen miles below us, and created quite a stir among the people, by his zeal in advocating those peculiar notions for which the sect is distinguished. Many of our citizens went down to hear him, and some thought him the greatest man they ever listened to. Of course, his sentiments spread like wildfire, and threatened serious consequences to the cause of orthodox Christianity. A young Mr. W——, a student of medicine, whose sentiments were of the materialist type, invited the Rev. Mr. S—— to come to our town and preach. On hearing it, I expressed a desire that he should preach on their peculiar doctrines. The Doctor, with whom the young student was boarding, said he would—that he expected him to put up at his house, and would request him to do so. The appointed time arrived, and Mr. S—— came and delivered his wonderful discourse. He spent considerable time, in the first place, proving that there is but one God; then he occupied an hour and a half in proving that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and finally closed by

drawing the conclusion from these two propositions, that Jesus Christ is not God.

The first and second propositions are perfectly Scriptural; no man, with the Bible before him, will pretend to deny them; but the inference is not warranted by the premises. There is more in the conclusion than in the premises; hence, the argument is fallacious; but it was just the kind of discourse to produce effect among superficial thinkers. Many were highly elated—thought the new doctrine unanswerably established; it was therefore manifestly important to do something at once to counteract the influence of the mischievous error, before it brought forth fruit to perfection. Impressed with this fact, I announced that at my next regular appointment—three weeks from the Sabbath on which Mr. S—— preached—I would, the Lord willing, offer my views on the *deity of our Lord Jesus Christ*. This produced a breeze. Mr. S——'s sermon, and the one now proposed, formed the whole topic of conversation; the excitement was intense; Bibles were seen on the counter and in the shops—every one had something to say on the Sonship of our adorable Redeemer. O, that they had been as eager to seek redemption in his blood! But men are always inclined to show more zeal for an opinion, than for the life of their souls. Mr. S—— preached another sermon before my appointment came, which had no tendency to allay the excitement. At length the day arrived, the house was

crowded with wide-awake hearers, and I endeavored, to the best of my ability, to vindicate this fundamental doctrine of our holy religion, which had been so virulently assailed. I propose to give an outline of the discourse delivered on that occasion.

The text selected was the last clause of the first verse of the first chapter of our Lord's Gospel by St. John: "AND THE WORD WAS GOD." I remarked as follows: "And—the—word—was—God." Was it not? Who will dispute it? I dare not! Jesus Christ was the Word, as may be seen in the 14th verse: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, etc." Now, this Word, the Lord Jesus, who *was God*, and who *was made flesh*, possessed two whole, complete, and yet distinct natures; he was truly and essentially God, and truly and essentially man. He is sometimes spoken of in Scripture in reference to his human nature, and sometimes in reference to his higher nature—his essential Godhead, or Deity. When reference is had to his humanity, inferiority is attributed to him; as when he says, "My Father is greater than I;" but when the reference is to his higher nature, perfect equality with the Father is ascribed to him; as when he says, "I and my Father are one."

But right here, in the outset, we are met with the objection—the old stereotyped objection of infidelity against Christianity—that this is so mysterious that we can not comprehend it. The inquiry is urged upon us, "Do you expect us to believe



in mysteries?" We do expect you to believe in facts, the mode of which you can not understand. If you do not, you will believe in nothing. You are surrounded with mystery; you find it without and within you; the air you breathe, the water you drink, the food you eat, the sights that delight your eyes, the sounds that salute your ears, the fragrant odors that regale your sense of smell—all these contain mysteries which no finite mind can fathom. But we do not ask you to believe in mysteries; we only ask you to believe what God has revealed—to take his word and testimony, believing it to contain nothing but the truth, though that truth be so high, so great, so sublime as to tower to the heavens, and lose itself from your gaze, in the ineffable light that surrounds the throne of God! You must learn to distinguish between a fact, and the mode of a fact. You can believe in one and not the other. You believe your soul and body are united—there is the fact; but you know nothing about *how* they are united—that is, you do not understand the *mode* of the fact, and you believe nothing about the mode. The fact is before you, and it challenges your belief; but the mode is mysterious. Thus in religion: the facts, the truths, are revealed, and we are called upon to believe them; and whatever of mystery attaches to them, is found to belong to the mode of the facts, and is not an object of faith. But it is absurd to reject facts, because you can not understand the

manner of them. You do no such thing in regard to the world around you, and I would have you draw off your minds at once from mysteries, and fix them upon the facts brought to light in the Bible.

But suppose I quote fifty passages proving that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, these will not disprove that he is God—for he is both; or suppose I bring forward as many texts to prove that he is God, these will not disprove that he is man—because he is both God and man; so when our opponents prove that the Son of man was inferior to his almighty Father, they have proved nothing at all bearing on the issue before us. They must prove that he is *not God!* They must make it appear that the *Word was not made flesh*, or else that the text is false when it says *the Word was God!*

I wish you to notice that there are two *names*—I say not words, but names—which are synonymous: I AM, and JEHOVAH. These are underived, and incommunicable. I AM, means self-existent, independent, a perfect whole; it denotes a nature, or subsistence, that can not but be—and which can not be imparted to any other being. So with the name Jehovah. It is the proper title of the self-existent, independent, immutable God. Now, if I show that Jehovah of the Old Testament, and Jesus Christ of the New Testament, are one and the same being, you will be bound to admit the doctrine for which I contend; that our Lord and Savior is the ever-living

and true God. Now for the text once more: "*And the Word was God!*"

I have one broad proposition; namely, *Jesus Christ is the unoriginated God*. I pledge myself to establish, from the Scriptures, this most glorious doctrine. In order to redeem this pledge, I will proceed to collect and collate passages from the Old and New Testaments, showing their bearing on the point before us. The first I notice is Exodus iii, 14: "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Compare this with John viii, 58: "Jesus saith unto them, before Abraham was, I AM." Had Christ merely intended to claim that he existed before Abraham was born he would have used the past tense; but this he never did with reference to his own essential nature or being. He claims the Old Testament appellation of the self-existent God. He was therefore the eternal God, or he made a wrong use of this title, and claimed a character he did not possess.

See, next, Ex. xix, 16-20: "And it came to pass, on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a



furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up." Compare this with Hebrews xii, 18-26: "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more, (for they could not endure that which was commanded, and if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake;) but ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh! For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath prom-

ised, saying Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." Both these passages, I claim, refer to Jesus Christ as God: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh!" This manifestly refers to Christ. He is the "Mediator of the new covenant;" and his word is the law of the Church. Whoever may be alluded to as speaking on *the earth*, which was probably Moses, it is Christ that "speaketh from heaven." This is clear beyond question from the scope of the passage; but it is equally plain that it was the same being "whose voice then shook the earth"—that is, when the voice spoke to Moses on Sinai. But if it is Christ that speaketh from heaven, and if it was his voice that shook the earth in the days of Moses, then surely Christ is God, or Paul was mistaken.

In corroboration of the position that both the above Scriptures refer to Christ, proving him to be the Jehovah of the Old Testament, I present the following: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Psalm lxviii, 17, 18. Compare this with Ephesians iv, 7, 8: "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore, he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Now, that same

God that was upon Mount Sinai, was among the angels of God, and ascended up on high, according to the Psalmist; and St. Paul affirms that it was Christ. Who ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men? Paul says it was Christ; but the Psalmist says it was the Lord, the God that dwelleth among the angels, the same that was upon Sinai; therefore, Christ is God, the God of Israel, or Paul made a wrong application of the passage.

Look, next, at Numbers xxi, 5, 6: "And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." Compare this with 1st Corinthians x, 9: "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." The Israelites tempted the Lord in the wilderness—they "spake against God;" but Paul says they tempted Christ. This is the meaning of the apostle's language, beyond all doubt; for, the pronoun *him*, after the word "tempted," is clearly implied; and the plainest rules of grammar require that it be understood of Christ. But if so, then Christ must be God—the Jehovah God of Israel, or Paul has misapplied the Scripture.

I direct attention to the following verses from the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy, for the pur-



pose of fixing your minds upon the term "Rock;" namely, the 4th, 15th, 18th, 31st: "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." "Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee." "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." See, also, Psalm lxxviii, 35: "And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer." But St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, says, this rock was Christ. "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: (for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ.)" 1 Cor. x, 4. Christ was the Rock, the Redeemer, the God, the high God, the salvation of Israel, or St. Paul is guilty of perverting the Scriptures!

Now read Nehemiah ix, 30: "Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy Spirit, in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands." Whose spirit was in the prophets? Was it not the Spirit of God? But Peter said it was the Spirit of Christ. "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should

come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified, beforehand, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter i, 10, 11. God inspired the prophets, by his Holy Spirit, and that was the Spirit of Christ; therefore, Christ is God, or Peter was in the wrong! "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Psalm xlv, 6, 7. St. Paul applies this passage to Christ, in Hebrews i, 8, 9: "But unto the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever," etc.; therefore, the Son is God, or the application of this passage to him is wrong. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." Psalm cii, 25-27. This is an inspired address to God, the God of Israel, whom David worshiped; but it is applied to Christ by an inspired apostle, Heb. i, 10-12: "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth," etc.; the conjunction "and" connects this with the first clause of the 8th verse, "But unto the Son, he saith," etc.; so that there can be no doubt that

the passage is applied to Christ: Christ is therefore God, or the apostle was wrong in applying these words to him.

Let us next notice Isaiah xl, 3-5: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." This passage is applied to John the Baptist, preparing the way before Christ, the coming Messiah. "For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Matt. iii, 3. Wesley, Burkett, Benson, Buck, Clarke, and the learned generally, tell us that "Lord," in this place, is Jehovah, in the original of the Old Testament, and there is not the least shadow of doubt that the prophet spoke of the great God of Israel; but John was the "voice," and he was sent to prepare the way before Christ; therefore Christ is God, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, or the passage is misapplied in Matthew. On this point also compare Malachi iii, 1, with Matthew xi, 7-10.

Hosea xiii, 4: "Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no God but



me: for there is no Savior beside me." Compare with Jude 25: "To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen." God says by the mouth of Hosea, that he is the only God, and the only Savior; Jude ascribes praises to the only wise God and Savior; therefore, if Christ be not God, he is not a Savior! So Isaiah xliii, 11: "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior." But Paul says, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Titus ii, 13. Jesus Christ is therefore God, or he is not a Savior; for God says, "Beside me there is no Savior!"

Look at the following: "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." Isaiah xliv, 6. Now look at this: "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; *I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth and was dead*; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. i, 17, 18. Was it Christ that was dead, and liveth again, having the keys of hell and of death? None dare dispute it! Then Christ says, "I am the first and the last:" and God says, "I am the first and the last; and beside me there is no God!" Christ, therefore, is "the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of

hosts ;” or this Scripture, which calls him “ the first and the last,” is false.

I now direct attention to Isaiah xii, 2 : “ Behold, God is my salvation ; I will trust, and not be afraid : for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song ; he also is become my salvation.” Compare with Acts iv, 12 : “ Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” This was said of Christ ; but the prophet said the Lord JEHOVAH is become his salvation : Christ is therefore the Lord JEHOVAH, in whom is everlasting strength, or else the prophet, or St. Peter was mistaken. But if Christ is the Lord JEHOVAH, he is truly and essentially God ; for this is that undervived and incommunicable name which belongs to none but the self-existent, eternal God.

But I will cease collating Old and New Testament passages, and notice a few other Scriptures in a general way, and bring my remarks to a close.

“ For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given : and the government shall be upon his shoulder : and his name [expressive of nature] shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.” Isaiah ix, 6. This passage refers to Christ, and causes no little trouble to those who deny his claims to the perfections of Deity. Mr. S—— told us that Christ is called God, because he is the father of God’s children—pretty good, is it not?—and that

there can not be a father without a son, nor a son without a father; and that the son can not be as old as his father, etc. Now look at this: There can be no father till there is a son; then, whatever God was prior to the existence of the Son, he was not Father; and the moment the Son came into being, the Father, as such, came into being, or became what he was not before! Or, he says, "There can be no Father without a Son;" and if father is a property of the Deity, an essential characteristic of his nature, then the existence of the Son is necessary to the perfection of God; and if God was always perfect, the Son must always have existed. But the trouble with our opponents is, they constantly conceive of God as of men, and because a man is never so old as his father, they argue that there is no sense in which the Son of God is equal to his Father, in power and eternity, notwithstanding such equality is ascribed to him in the Bible. But the cases are not parallel. The nature of God and the nature of man are far different. This argument against the Deity of Christ falls to the ground, because the analogy, in which it is founded, has no existence.

Here is another criticism. Mr. Millard says, "The prophet does not say that he *is* the mighty God, but that he shall be *so called*." But who calls him the mighty God? Have we not seen that he is "so called" in the Scriptures? And if so, are we not bound to believe that he is *correctly so called*? If the



sacred writers "call" him what he is not, they do it from ignorance or wickedness; but to attribute either to them is to destroy their claim to inspiration, and plunge us into open infidelity.

But again: It is said that men are called gods in the Bible, as when the Lord said unto Moses, "I have made thee a god to Pharaoh." True; but where men are called gods, the scope of the passage points out the subordinate sense in which the term is used. Not so of Christ. He is plainly recognized as the very God who said to Moses, "I have made thee a god to Pharaoh." This expression refers to Exodus iv, 16, where God tells Moses he shall be to his brother *as God*, or "instead of God," implying that what Moses received of God, he should communicate to his brother, who was to be his spokesman. He was to make Pharaoh see the power and feel the judgments of God; but there is nothing like the nature of God ascribed to Moses. Neither Moses, Joshua, or any of the prophets or apostles, are called the "mighty God." This appellation belongs to the "Son given," "Immanuel," God with us.

"But he is the Son of God." Yes, and men are sometimes called "sons of God;" but this fact does not prove that men are sons in the same sense that Christ is a Son. So the fact that men are called "gods," does not prove that Christ is God in the same sense that men are. The same argument that will prove him not God, because men are called gods, will prove him not the Son, because men are called

sons. He is called the Son of man; meaning that he is truly and properly man, for he had no human father; so his being called the Son of God, denotes that he is truly and properly God; that he has the nature, the attributes, the perfections of God. You might as well argue that I am not man, because I am the son of a man, as to contend that Christ is not God, because he is the Son of God.

I do not pretend to be deeply skilled in logic, but I understand it to be a well-established maxim, that any proposition or argument that proves too much, or proves a falsehood, proves nothing at all. This is certainly the case with the argument of our opponents. It proves what is false in proving that Christ is not the Son of God, because men are called the sons of God. Or if it be said that it only proves that Christ and men are gods in the same sense—that is, inferior gods, or gods by office—it will still prove that they are all “sons” in the same sense, and contradict the passages that call Christ “the only-begotten Son.” View it as you will, it proves too much, and therefore proves nothing.

My next proof-text is 1 Timothy iii, 16: “And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” There being but the one nominative expressed or implied, the plain grammatical construction of the passage is, “God was manifest in the flesh, God was

justified in the Spirit, God was seen of angels, God was preached unto the Gentiles, God was believed on in the world, God was received up into glory." This was all in the person of Christ—the Word which was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

I present one more proof-text: "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col. i, 16, 17. Our opponents try to break the force of this and other texts of like character, by asserting that Christ created all things by delegated power; that God made him an instrument in this great work. But this is false. If Christ had created all things by delegated power, he would have created them *for him from whom he received the power*; but the text says "all things were created by him, *and for him!*" He is, therefore, the absolute proprietor of the creation. Isaiah—xliv, 4—bears witness against the idea of creation by delegated power: "Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." This was Christ. He is the Lord of hosts, the Redeemer of Israel, beside whom there is no God or Savior. He created the heavens *alone*; he spread abroad the earth *by himself!* He employed neither agent nor instrument. "For he spake, and



it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." He is before all things, he created all things, he upholds all things, and all things were made by him alone, and for him alone. This includes all things visible and invisible; all thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, whether they be visible or invisible; and if there can be any thing found throughout the limitless empire of matter and mind, which he did not make, or which existed before him, then he is not God, and this text is not true! But, till that something be found, we will maintain that our adorable Christ is he who "stretched out the heavens over the north, and hung the earth upon nothing." "As for our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name." Whatever others may say, or in whomsoever others may trust, I want no Redeemer beside.

I now close the argument, believing I have made it plain to you, that the Jehovah of the Old Testament and Jesus Christ of the New Testament, are the same identical being, the one true and living God. I have given you plain Scripture compared with Scripture, all bearing directly on the point. I have given you Scripture without garbling or torturing, and if you are not satisfied, you would not be satisfied if I had quoted many more passages—which might have been done if time would have permitted—and now I leave the subject with you. But remember this distinctly, that if you controvert the subject, your controversy is not with me, but with the Bible; if you gainsay the doctrine, you gainsay the Bible; and if you

refute the doctrine, you refute the Bible. I shut you up to this faith, and pray God to guide you by his Spirit into all truth. And I charge you to keep this blessed doctrine without spot, "unrebukable, till the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."

Prior to the delivery of this discourse, Mr. S—— had crowded audiences; he was looked up to, by many, as an oracle, and began to wield a mighty influence; but his next appointment came one week after the vindication of our doctrine, when he preached to twelve or fifteen persons, and made no more appointments in our place. Gentlemen in the place expressed themselves astonished that they had permitted themselves to be duped by the sophistical arts of this man, in relation to so plain and Scriptural a doctrine. He was now vanquished, not by superior intellectual prowess, rhetorical niceties, or dexterity in logic, but by the sword of the Spirit, the plain word of God.

I should have mentioned, as connected with my first year, on this circuit, that, in making pastoral visits, I was not confined to the membership, but called at the houses of the irreligious. In visiting a certain family of this description, I found the man gentlemanly and kind, conversed with him about the

interest of his soul, and he listened attentively. Then I turned to his wife, and asked her if she had experienced religion. She was much offended, and used language which I will not repeat; but, while vengeance gleamed from her keen, black eye, I pressed upon her attention the things of the kingdom of God. After this, I obtained the privilege, and prayed with them, and went on my way, trusting in God. Subsequently, our quarterly meeting was held in that neighborhood, and the presiding elder leaving on Saturday, devolved the duty on me to preach on Sabbath, at 11 o'clock. In those days, this was no small responsibility; but, in the name of the Lord, I lifted up my voice, claiming the promise of him who said, "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world." In the afternoon we had prayer meeting, when I delivered an exhortation, and invited penitents to the altar for prayers. To the astonishment of, perhaps, all in the house, this woman who had given me to understand that she did not thank me for my religious visits, rose up in the congregation, rushed forward, and cried aloud for mercy. Thank God! her cry was not unavailing. She found peace and joy in believing, and with her husband and several others, she united with the Church, and became a faithful Christian. This encouraged me to follow the divine direction: "Sow thy seed in the morning, and in the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they shall be both alike



good." We are never to be weary in well-doing, for, in due season, we shall reap if we faint not.

This year, I made a new appointment at the glass-works—a fearfully wicked place. At first, there were many skeptics, and I felt much embarrassment in preaching to them. I had to preach in the morning, and meet a society of forty to sixty members, ride three miles and preach, meet class, and ride seven miles over the sand-plains, to preach here at six in the evening. At, perhaps, my third visit, my mental sky cleared, my soul warmed into a flame of love, the embarrassment was gone, and my tongue made like the pen of a ready writer. I became exceedingly happy, and a deep, solemn feeling pervaded the audience. Ever afterward, I took pleasure in preaching at the glass-works, and may say, with humility, that, under God's blessing, my labors at that place were made instrumental in laying the foundation for a good society.

At one of my preaching-places a Rev. gentleman came, crying, "Water, water!" He would feign have people think they must not only go into the water, but be covered all over with it, or they could not enter the kingdom; and some partly believed his preaching. He was about to baptize some, and was wading about in the water, pouring out anathemas upon all who would presume to baptize otherwise than by immersion; when, becoming exceedingly zealous, he cried out, "*I glory in the water!*" Thereupon, an old lady upon the shore exclaimed, "I would

much rather you would glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!" A good rebuke. Whenever men become so absorbed with the idea of water salvation, they are in danger of neglecting the "blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." I would commend to all such the words of Peter, "Baptism is not the putting away of the filthiness of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God.

At another point in this circuit was the strongest preacher of Calvinism I have ever known, the Rev. Mr. W——. He used language which showed him to be a genuine Calvinist—one of the pure stock. I will give a few of his remarks. Said he, "There are but eleven elect in this township; I am not sure that there are that number, though I think there are; but I am certain that there are nine, and I know that I am one of them." Again, he said, "You have heard that old W—— has said there are infants in hell not a span long, and you said you did not believe old W—— ever said so. Now I tell you there *are* infants in hell, not a span long, and all reprobate infants, born or unborn, are damned!" The reader will agree that Mr. W—— was one of the real blue-stock-ing sort. He held up the monster to the gaze of all, without covering. I commend his honesty, but envy not the heart that received such "horrible decrees" as the Gospel of grace—the glad tidings preached to all people!

Mr. W——'s calculation that there were nine or

eleven elect in the township, reminds me of an anecdote related to me, over forty years ago, of an officer in the Revolutionary army. He was riding through one of the New England towns on the Sabbath day, when the "tithing-man," accosted him with the information that he must or ought not to travel on the Sabbath day. "What shall I do, sir?" said the officer. "Go to meeting," said the tithing-man. Said the officer, "Meeting! where is meeting?" "Up there," pointing to the church, said the tithing-man. The officer put up his horse at the tavern, and went to church. As he went stamping in, the pew-doors flew open in every direction, but he fixed his eye upon the speaker, and walked half way to the pulpit before he sat down. The minister was deeply absorbed in his subject—giving the opinions of different men in regard to the number that would be saved. It was the opinion of some that one out of fifty would be saved, others thought it would be only one out of a hundred; "but," said he, "I give it as my opinion, that not more than one out of five hundred will be saved!" At this the officer sprang to his feet, and said, "Well, gentlemen, you may have my chance for nothing!" and put on his cocked hat, and walked out of the house. Now it was perhaps wrong in the officer to travel on the Sabbath, and wrong to disturb the congregation by speaking and going out; but it was also wrong in the preacher to be calculating the number of the elect. Had he been preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, from a full heart, the



warm, generous, impulsive heart of the rough old officer might have been touched, and his soul humbled at the foot of the cross. But the cold, repulsive propositions of high-toned Calvinism will always disgust, and never attract such unsophisticated spirits as that old Revolutionary officer. Thank God that my feet were disentangled from the meshes of this heart-chilling system, in the days of my youth! I then learned that he who sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust, whose tender mercies are over all his works, who feedeth the young ravens when they cry unto him, and supplieth the want of every living thing, hath no pleasure in the death of any, but provided amply in the death of his only-begotten Son for the salvation of every child of man. Then, also, I learned that men perish not for Adam's fault, but only for rejecting or neglecting the great salvation provided in Jesus Christ.

When my second year on this circuit wound to a close, I was constrained to call it a very happy year. We had revival influence in our bounds all the year round, and many souls were happily converted to God. Halleluiah to God! I delight to think of those days. They were days of labor and toil, but also of great peace and joy. I left many dear friends on Bern circuit, never to see them more on earth, but with a good hope through grace of meeting them in heaven, where

"Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,  
Are felt and fear'd no more."

## CHAPTER XIII.

## KINGSTON CIRCUIT—TWO YEARS.

IN May, 1824, we had a harmonious session of conference, in the city of New York. Some time previous to this, the presiding elder of the district adjoining that in which my work was, the Rev. D. Ostrander, called at my house and gave intimation that he wanted me on the circuit next below where I then was. The Rev. S—— had a congregation there, and many of the people were falling in with his notions, and, having been successful in arresting the progress of his mischievous sentiments where I lived the previous year, it was thought I might be useful in that work. I told him I had no objection to the arrangement, and we parted; but, at the close of this conference, I was unexpectedly sent to Kingston circuit. This appointment, though contrary to my expectation, was entirely satisfactory to me.

Kingston was a very pleasant town of considerable size. It had been burned down in the Revolutionary war, but was rebuilt, mostly of stone; it was, however, rather a hard place for Methodism. In an early day, some of our pioneer preachers formed a class near town, but the members were severely persecuted, the house in which they met was stoned, the

windows broken in, and finally the place was abandoned, and left without Methodist preaching till within two or three years of my appointment to the circuit. John D. Moriarty had been enabled then to establish an appointment in the place, and a few Methodists that lived in the town and vicinity, determined to build a house for God. It was mostly done by three men—brothers O’Neal, Hitt, and Jacobus—was not large, but neat and well finished. Brother John Kennedy was my colleague. This was his second year in the ministry, and his second year on this circuit. He was quite a promising young man; but I need not speak further of him, as he is now extensively known as Dr. Kennedy, and was an active member of the General conference which recently sat in Indianapolis, Indiana. We labored together harmoniously, both living in Kingston, and preached there twice on every other Sabbath. We were looked upon as miserable heretics in doctrine, and every effort was made to prevent the people from hearing us preach; but, at night especially, they would come out to hear for themselves. In this way our doctrines and usages became better understood, prejudices gave way, and we were listened to with patience and attention. The settled minister was a rigid Calvinist, and frequently lectured his people against countenancing us with their presence in our meetings. One day he had a minister from Long Island to fill his pulpit, and, having no afternoon appointment, I went to his church. He preached



a doctrinal sermon, laboring to establish the idea of a limited atonement. He maintained that Christ died not for the world, but for God's "dear children"—said this was more comforting than Arminianism, etc. That night I preached in our church, and had a large number of the same hearers. I took opposite ground, and dwelt on the universality of the atonement. I expressed astonishment that men could have hardihood enough to stand up and assert, in direct contradiction to the holy Scriptures, that Christ died not for the whole world, but for God's children only. Then, drawing out the Scripture argument at length, I told the people I should believe the Bible on this subject, in preference to the say-so of five hundred of those men fresh from Andover College. This effort had the desired effect. The plain word of God impressed many hearts, and, under the all-commanding motives of the sublime doctrine that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, quite a number were led to the cross, happily converted, and united with the Church under our care.

We found, in this work, quite a number of old-fashioned Methodists. These were noble spirits, who served God from principle, and labored to sustain the cause of God, by supporting the ministry, and in every way contributing to the advancement of religion in their midst. In Marbletown, we had a small house, small congregation, and small society, but strong opposition. People seemed to think they had a right to do as they pleased when they attended our

services. For example: A young man came into the church one Sabbath, laid down flat on his back, threw his feet over the bench, and lay there grinning, gaping, and showing his teeth, as if he were teaching grinning school, and considered himself a perfect model for the imitation of his pupils. After he had exhibited in this way for some time, I paused, and then remarked in substance as follows: "If that young man is sick, I would thank some of those young men near him to help him out and to assist him home; he may need a physician, for he seems to be in great distress." The remarks had some effect in improving his manners, and in restraining the impudence of others. "It takes all sorts of people to make every body," says some one; but what every body are fit for is, perhaps, very difficult to tell. At all events, many act as though they were fit for nothing else, and had no higher aim in life than to annoy those who try to do better than themselves.

In this circuit, also, I found some Baptist brethren who were exceedingly zealous for having the water applied in the right form, in the act of baptism. While engaged in pastoral visiting, I fell in company with one who introduced this subject. I informed him that I came there to preach the Gospel, that I sought no controversy, but should always vindicate the usages of my Church when they were assailed. "Well," said he, "if we follow the example of our Savior, we know we are right; and if we do not, we know we are wrong." "Well, Christ was circum-

cised," said I, "and you do not follow his example; therefore, you know you are wrong." "Ah," said he, "that was not Christ's own act—it was done for him when he was a child." "Then I will give you another," said I. "Christ continued all night in prayer; you do not follow his example, and, therefore, you know you are in the wrong." And here is another: "Christ kept the Jewish Sabbath all his life; you do not follow his example, and you are, therefore, wrong." Again: "When Christ ate the Passover and instituted the sacrament of the Lord's supper, he did it in the night, in an upper room; and if you follow his example, you must take that sacrament in the night, in an upper room; but you do not do it, therefore, you know you are wrong." He was led to discover that *all the forms* and incidental circumstances connected with the original administration of the Christian ordinances, are not essential to the validity of the ordinances themselves. We had no further disputing on the subject. He was a kind, pious, and generally well-informed man, but inclined to put a little too much dependence in the water. His oldest daughter attended our meetings, was awakened, converted, joined the Methodist Church, and continued a faithful Christian as long as I knew her.

We had some precious seasons on the circuit, and witnessed the conversion of a goodly number of souls. As the year drew to a close, I commenced making new class-books, setting aside such as were delinquent and could not be reclaimed, and admitting such as



had stood out acceptably their term of probation. This I deem important, that at the close of each year such disciplinary work as this should all be done up clean and fair, as far as it is possible to do it. I found myself much attached to this people, and wound up the year pleasantly, it having been a year of reasonable prosperity in the Church, and took my leave only for a short time, fully expecting to return the second time, as I had always done, excepting the first year, when I was stationed upon the Island, and wished to leave at the end of the first year.

I was not disappointed in my expectations. At the close of the conference of May, 1825, held in Troy, N. Y., I was returned to Kingston, with F. W. Smith for my colleague. He was a young man of some standing in the conference, of good mind, well disposed, but possessed of a good deal of vivacity, which sometimes betrayed him into lightness of conversation. But thirty years of toil have doubtless put the "curb-bit" upon the sprightliness of his temper; and if this little volume should fall into his hands, he will read and smile at the remembrance of days long since past. I have no fear that he will take offense at these remarks. I knew him well, and feel satisfied that he now views the matter of which I speak in the same light here presented. God grant that we may meet in heaven! We labored together like brethren, in perfect concord, throughout the year. Since then he has filled some important stations in the Church.

This year, I rented a house and moved my family

to Saugerties, twelve miles from Kingston. Here, near the mouth of Esop's creek, were falls, which afforded excellent water-power privileges for mills and machinery. A company from New York city made an extensive purchase, commenced business on a large scale, employing from fifty to one hundred hands, and paying good wages. Two of my sons engaged more or less of their time with this company, and my house was filled with boarders; this necessarily increased my care, but never hindered me from my prayers at home, nor from my duties on the circuit. My wife's parents had moved to Ohio about fourteen years previous to this, and they often wrote, urging us to come out and live and die near to them. They wrote in glowing terms of the advantages that men with growing families might derive by coming to this state; and inasmuch as my family was growing, my own health considerably impaired, and my private means nearly all spent, I felt, after weighing the matter in all its bearings, that it was my indispensable duty to make an effort for providing better for my family than I could possibly do in the bounds of the New York conference; and, feeling thus, I saw no alternative but removal to the state of Ohio. I think I never possessed a whining disposition—but I must tell the reader that much of the time, while traveling in that conference, I was so pressed for means of support as scarcely to know which way to turn; I wore patched clothing, and rode many a day with-

out dinner, because my family had need of every cent I could save. While on this subject, I will say that I have passed through scenes of suffering from filth, insects, open cabins, swamps, swimming creeks, insults, etc., enough to fill a volume; but this is not my object. I count not the sufferings of this life worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us, or even with what God has permitted me to enjoy all along the pathway in which his providence hath led me. While I write, my heart rises up in thankfulness to Him for his great goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men. I feel like laying down my pen and shouting his high praises! Glory to God and the Lamb forever! But, notwithstanding my resolution to emigrate to the state of Ohio, with a view to improving the condition of my family, my heart was as fully as ever in the work in which I had been engaged for seventeen years.

In regard to the work on the circuit, I will say that we enjoyed peace and harmony in our borders through all the year, and we had some good revivals of religion. We had two glass-works appointments on this circuit. In order to reach one of these, we had to ascend a mountain for about three miles, and when we were there the land seemingly stood up edgewise. There was a large society here, but the members were poor, very poor, as regards this world's good; yet, many of them were rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom. They were



truly pious, and always glad to see the preacher, and make him as comfortable as they were able. But their good will and warm hearts would not screen him from the piercing wind and biting cold. Often did my back, limbs, and toes ache with cold, beneath their friendly roofs. I said to one, "Brother, why do you stay here upon the mountain, where the land stands edgewise, and the rocks cover the surface?" Said he, "We are too poor to get away." He actually believed he was, and I told him he always would be as poor, if he remained there, and that I believed it was intruding on the wolves and bears to occupy such places—that God never designed them for human habitations, for he had spread out rich, fertile plains and valleys sufficient for the wants of the race; and that I, for one, intended to go to the wide west, the coming year, the Lord willing. It does seem that some men are almost afraid to venture beyond sight of the smoke of the cabin in which they were born, and, to the permanent injury of their families, cleave to the knobs and hill-sides of their nativity, when they might, with a little industrious effort, establish themselves in independent circumstances upon some of the broad fields which yet lie in a state of nature.

Although we preached at this place on week-day, we had a good-sized congregation of attentive hearers. Poverty did not prevent the people from loving and enjoying the means of grace. "The poor have the Gospel preached to them;" and I doubt

not that many from these hill-sides and mountain peaks, will ascend to heaven, while rich, ungodly sinners, from their costly mansions and splendid farms, will sink down to the gulf of perdition. Dear reader, think of this—think how terrible it is to exchange the luxuries of life for the quenchless fire and the undying worm! I pray God to send his Holy Spirit to thy heart, this moment! Thou art my brother, my sister, redeemed by my Savior's blood, and I desire to see thee saved high up in heaven! I will be clear of thy blood! I once more pray God to have mercy on thy never-dying soul!

As the time of my departure from this field drew near, I found myself more and more attached to this people. Many of them were strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. More than thirty years have passed since I gave them the parting hand, yet I still have them in my heart. Through the grace of God, I hope to meet them on the other side of Jordan's stream. Some of them have gone on before, and while I sing—

“On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,  
And cast a wishful eye,  
To Canaan's fair and happy land,  
Where my possessions lie,”

I fancy their response comes wafted by the gales of Paradise—

“All o'er *these* wide-extended plains,  
Shines one eternal day;  
*Here* God, the Son, forever reigns,  
And scatters night away.”

## CHAPTER XIV.

## MOVE WEST—LOCATE—EMPLOYED BY THE ELDER.

IN May, 1826, the session of the New York conference was held in the city of New York. Having made up my mind to move west, and having been cordially invited by friends in the city, to bring my wife with me to conference, I concluded to do so, as this would, in all probability, be her last opportunity of visiting that city. We were kindly entertained at the house of brother Palmer, who, with his amiable family, took delight in entertaining the servants of Christ on such occasions. Brother P. was blessed with an abundance of this world's goods, and placed a horse, carriage, and driver, at our disposal, every day of our sojourn in the city. This arrangement was very agreeable to Mrs. Lewis, as she had never before been in the city, and was thereby enabled to visit all the places of interest, and form some tolerable idea of the extent and situation of this great emporium.

I attended this session with intense interest, as it was the last time I expected to meet with the New York conference. The thought of leaving the honored fathers, who had instructed me in the great prin-



ciples of Christianity, and the younger brethren, with whom I had been associated, in the work of the ministry, perhaps no more to meet on earth, together with the consideration that I was about to take a step which would, probably, result in dissolving my relation to the Church, as a traveling preacher, excited, in my mind, reflections of a thrilling character. But I saw no alternative. The decisive step must be taken. My family had been laboring for months, in keeping boarders, teaching school, hauling lumber, and blasting rocks, for the purpose of raising means to carry us to Ohio, and I felt, that, as the best of my life had been given to the Church, my health was declining, and the Church was failing to give a sufficient compensation to meet the wants of my growing family, it was now my imperative duty to turn my attention to the cultivation of the rich soil of the west. I had been bred to farming, regarded it as a healthful and honorable employment, and was rather pleased with the idea of digging my support out of the earth. Hence, when my character came under examination, I arose and stated my purpose to the conference, and was immediately granted a supernumerary relation, with liberty to carry out my intention of moving to Ohio. I also received a certificate of this action of the conference, signed by Bishop George, the presiding officer. I have, before, spoken of Bishop George, as a favorite preacher. He was a man of strong, discriminating mind, a good presiding officer, an amiable companion, and a deeply-pious Christian.

I had the pleasure of rooming with him during one or two conference sessions, and was not only interested, but highly delighted with him. I also attended a camp meeting in company with him, and found him a warm-hearted, diligent laborer in his Master's vineyard. I saw him frequently down upon his knees, encouraging the mourners, and pointing them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. While others were praying, he would often respond, Amen, with much emphasis; and, sometimes he would lift up his clear, melodious voice, crying out, "O, for the descent of the Holy Ghost!" And, when he prayed, it was evident that his prayer entered the ear of the Lord God of Sabaoth, for answers were so manifest, that the most skeptical were made to tremble. His great power in the pulpit has been attributed, by some, to his deep feeling, and strong sympathy. This was not the only source of his power; he possessed the elements of genuine oratory—a voice of fine compass and variety, a clear, well-cultivated mind, and a wonderful knowledge of the human passions. Added to all this, was his love for the souls of men, his fervency of spirit, and the unction of the Holy One. I could say much more, but will not indulge. My feelings of respect, for the memory of this devoted servant of Christ, whose praise should be in all the Churches, would not permit me to say less.

I talked with the Bishop in regard to the country to which I was about to move. He told me there was abundance of mud, and few improvements; "but,"

said he, "if a man have plenty of boys to work, he may do well, *and it is a fine country for Methodists!*" This was what I wanted to hear; I was only about forty years of age—had not forgotten how to work—had some boys, and expected to contend, in common with others, with the difficulties peculiar to a newly-settled country. I took leave of the conference, went home, and commenced preparations for the journey. I had to visit, and bid farewell to my aged father, and other relatives and friends, where I was reared. This duty was to me a severe trial. Here were the hills over which my youthful feet had rambled, the companions of my childhood, my youth, and of my riper years, with whom I had mingled in friendly intercourse, all my life; the old school-house, in which I had been taught, and to which I had so often run an entire mile, after doing the chores of the morning, lest I should lose a lesson; and here, too, were the numerous disciples of Christ, whose acquaintance I had made as a minister of the Gospel—all these were now to be left, with the numerous associations that clustered around them, for a home among strangers in the western wilds. I thought of the words of St. Paul, "And now behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." With emotions of no ordinary sensibility, I bade adieu to my father and friends. Resting in the promise that God would protect us in the line of duty, I pronounced the word, *Farewell*.



On the 4th day of July, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of American Independence—a day suggestive of patriotism, heroic suffering, brilliant triumph, liberty and success—we started for the state of Ohio. A two-horse wagon held the few things we brought, and most of the family; while my wife, daughter, and myself, came in a light carriage, drawn by my old circuit horse. We made our way through New Jersey, into Pennsylvania, passing through Nazareth township, which I thought the most delightful spot of country I had ever seen. The face of the country was fine, the soil good, and in a state of high cultivation, with beautiful groves of timber with the underbrush cleared away, so that teams could pass freely in every direction. Taken altogether, it looked like a little paradise. On the first Saturday evening, we put up with a local preacher. On Sunday morning, I rode out with him some three or four miles, and preached to his congregation; came back and preached in the village at five o'clock. The next morning, I proposed to pay my bill, but he thought we were about even, and refused pay; so we took leave of this kind friend, and moved on slowly toward our western home. The next Saturday night brought us to Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Brother Griffin, of the Baltimore conference, was the stationed preacher at this place, and his quarterly meeting commenced that evening. Upon learning who I was, he inquired where I put up; I told him at the tavern. "Well," said he, "we have plenty of friends in this

place, and would be glad to have you stay to the meeting." Brother G. soon had us away from the tavern, among Methodists, who received us gladly, and made us feel at home. That evening the presiding elder invited me to preach, giving me my choice between that night and the next morning. I took the night appointment. The next morning the elder preached an excellent sermon, and urged me to preach again at night; this I did to a crowded congregation, and humbly trust some good was effected. On Monday morning the kind friends insisted that we should stay to their love-feast, and rest ourselves and teams another day. We consented; and the love-feast in Carlisle, proved very similar to such meetings where I had traveled. Methodism is one throughout the wide-spread connection, and nothing contributes more to her unity and spirituality than these feasts of love.

On Tuesday morning we bade adieu to those friends, whose hospitality we had shared, promising to write them after our journey was ended—a promise which, owing to the press of business, and the numerous cares connected with settling in a new country, was neglected from time to time, and never fulfilled. Should this little work ever fall into the hands of those friends, they will learn that their kindnesses have never been forgotten.

The next Sabbath was spent in the Alleghany Mountains, without the privileges of public worship. Another weary week rolled round, and the Sabbath

dawned upon us in the state of Virginia. Here we had no opportunity of attending divine service, but the young people began collecting at an early hour, at the public house where we were staying, for the purpose of having a dance! Upon ascertaining the character of the gathering, we hitched up and drove a few miles to another tavern, where we rested in quietness till Monday morning. How terrible the thought that men and women should spend the holy Sabbath in dancing their souls to hell! I am no friend to dancing. It is attended with evil, and only evil, and that continually. No good ever comes of it. The Baptist lost his head through the freaks of a dancing damsel! But many apologize for it on the ground that it is conducive to health. Exercise is good; but if the young ladies would get up the big spinning-wheel, and exercise upon that, as their mothers used to do; or if they would engage in other useful employments, which they might do, without sacrificing their dignity, they would never die for want of exercise, nor find it necessary to resort to any such foolish capering, in order to develop the muscular system. "But then it teaches politeness." Well, politeness is "good-breeding," gentility, or elegance of manners; but how the true refinement of mind and heart necessary to politeness, is to be learned in the ball-room, is a mystery I can not solve. And I give it as my solemn judgment, that I have never marked any difference in the manners of dancers and others, only that they are fonder of



frivolity, fun, novel-reading, and nonsense, than those who do not dance. But, perhaps, since the practice has been taught morality, and, under a new *cognomen*, has been christened and introduced into respectable "*institutions*," it will be best to drop the subject.

I could not give the reader who never saw them, an adequate idea of the roads over which we passed, in crossing the Mountains; and those who have witnessed the bluffs, ravines, and rocks, which make up the variety of scenery through those huge elevations of the earth, have no need of description. Day after day, we moved along, cheered with the assurance that every ascent or descent we passed, brought us a little nearer the land of our ardent hopes. Sometimes I would drive ahead, unhitch my faithful horse, go back and assist the other team up the steep, and then, after resting beneath the shade of the majestic trees, hitch up and resume our regular gait. At length, we found ourselves in Wheeling, Virginia, and lost but little time in crossing the Ohio, when we found ourselves in the state which we were adopting as our future home. But here we found even steeper ascents and descents than any we passed in the mountains. Still we "scrabbled" on, till we arrived within about forty miles of Zanesville, where we hired a man with a team to help us to that place. Thence we made our way, through Granville, to Berkshire, Delaware county, Ohio. Here we met Mrs. Lewis's father, and two brothers, from whom she had been separated four-

teen years. I need not speak of the happiness of that meeting. Suffice it to say that the whole neighborhood gave us a hearty welcome, and urged us to partake of their hospitalities. Such open-hearted friendship from strangers, is only to be met with in new countries, where artificial refinements, and sordid selfishness, have not yet taken full possession of the people.

We arrived at our destination on Friday, after being on the road about five weeks. I was immediately called on to preach; the appointment was announced, and, on Sabbath, I preached my first sermon in Ohio. This was about the middle of August. Among my hearers that day were old brother Janes and his wife, two of my old friends, while stationed on the island in Lake Champlain. He invited me to preach, the next Sabbath, in his barn; I did so, and had a good congregation for a new country. I soon had pressing invitations from the surrounding neighborhoods, to visit and preach among them. Thus, it will be perceived that I did not become settled in my new home till I was at my old, favorite business, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Two things seemed to operate to bring my services into demand: First, I came all the way from the New York conference; and, secondly, I had a clear, smooth voice. People are fond of new things, and they were, perhaps, more pleased with the sound than with the substance of my preaching. But I ought also to add, that they were not, in those days, possessed of

“itching ears;” they looked not with critical eye upon the rhetoric of the man, but waited for the bread of life and the power of the Holy Ghost. We worshiped God with singleness of heart, and had glorious times together in this wilderness land.

In about three weeks after our arrival at Berkshire, the quarterly meeting for Columbus circuit was held in the loft of brother Carpenter’s large mill; brother Jacob Young presiding elder, and brothers Joseph Carper and J. H. Power, the circuit preachers. I attended, and, after being introduced to the preachers, brother Young invited me to preach on Saturday, at eleven o’clock. I dwelt, with some liberty, upon the words of our Savior, John xv, 14: “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” The next morning, we had love-feast; here I found congenial spirits, and as the brethren and sisters sketched their experience, I felt that these were children of my Father in heaven. From that day to this, I have felt at home among Ohio Methodists. Brother Young desired me to preach again at, eleven, on Sabbath. I took for my text, “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man,” etc. A Presbyterian brother present said to one of his brethren, “If the doctrine preached to-day is correct, ours is wrong; and I think he proved his position from the Bible.” This man searched the Scriptures, till he was satisfied of the correctness of our doctrines, and then offered himself for membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church. His subsequent life evinced that he was a



man of God. On Saturday night, Mrs. Lewis and myself were invited to stay with Mr. Dustin. We formed a delightful acquaintance with him and his kind companion. They made no profession of religion, but were agreeable, generous friends; and the friendship then formed remains permanent. But, some time after this, Mrs. D. died, and I preached her funeral; Mr. D. sought and obtained religion some years ago, and is now a prominent member of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

When we arrived at Berkshire, we had fifteen dollars left, with which to furnish our house, lay in provisions, etc.; but we knew how, and felt willing, to work, and were soon at it. We lived, the first six months, in a room furnished by my brother-in-law. I sold my old circuit horse and carriage, and bought fifty acres of land. The next step was to get up a house. We went at it in good earnest, and I take pleasure in acknowledging the kindness of friends, who rendered me efficient aid. They turned out with axes and teams, cut and hauled logs, brick, and lumber, and soon we had a good cabin, neatly finished. After moving into it, on the 14th of May, 1827, we bowed the knee, and lifted up our hearts to God in thanksgiving, that we were permitted to make a beginning in this new country. I had written to the New York conference for a location; this was granted on the 17th of May, three days after we moved into our new cabin. Of course, I was now known as a local preacher. I had before sustained that relation

to the Church; but I have never been a local preacher only nominally. I was employed on a circuit before I had license to preach, and when I obtained license on Saturday, I started on the next Monday for my circuit. The year I located, I rode some twelve hundred miles, and preached from one to six sermons per week, winter and summer. Almost every day brought some sort of call. Funerals, protracted meetings, quarterly and camp meetings, beside ordinary Sabbath appointments, made demand for nearly my whole time. Sometimes I would tell them I could not go; but they would insist, till off would come the harness from my team, and away I went to seek the salvation of some for whom the Savior shed his blood.

I attended a camp meeting above Delaware, not far from Marion. Here I was remarkably aided by Divine grace, while holding up the only condition of discipleship, from Matthew xvi, 24: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." The glory of the Lord overshadowed the assembly, and, at the close of the sermon, three-fourths of the audience were upon their feet, crowding toward the stand. To thy name, O Lord, be all the glory forever!

Some time after this, two brethren from Knox county, over twenty miles distant, came to induce me to make arrangements for preaching regularly in their neighborhood. I told them I could not go. They replied that I would have to board them a

week, if I did not consent sooner. I informed them that my purpose in coming west was to raise my own bread; that I wished to labor, "working with my own hands," and was determined, with the blessing of Providence, to accumulate a little for after years. But they were willing to remunerate me for my time. My next excuse was, I had sold my circuit horse, and had no beast fit to ride. In reply to this, one brother said he had an excellent riding nag, and would exchange with me. At length I yielded, and sent an appointment. I continued riding out there, through the woods and mud, regularly during the year. That same season, I attended a camp meeting on "Black Lick"—preached from Luke xiii, 24: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." The meeting, upon the whole, was an interesting one. Here I made the acquaintance of Rev. Samuel Carpenter, a local preacher, and his lady. Our intercourse was pleasant then, and remains unchanged to this day. I attended another meeting on the same ground, and preached from Christ's address to the young man who had great possessions: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor," etc. Both of these meetings were profitable to the Church, and many were awakened and converted to God. Once more I thank God for camp meetings!

In March, 1829, I went to Columbus to attend our quarterly meeting. Rev. L. Swormstedt was on



the circuit, and Rev. D. Young the presiding elder. Brother Young said to me, "I am glad to see you; I want to employ you to fill a vacancy." My reply was, "I can not go." He then read me a letter he had received from Rev. C. Springer, informing him, that he should do no work on the circuit—Fairfield—after the next quarterly meeting, that he intended to withdraw from the Church, etc.; he then read his reply to this epistle. He acknowledged the receipt of brother S.'s letter, thanked him for the timely notice given of his intentions, informed him that his labors would be dispensed with after a certain date; adding, "If your conduct is satisfactory to yourself, I shall take no umbrage at it."

Mr. Springer, it will be recollected, was one of the leading spirits in the Radical secession. He had written for the "Mutual Rights," agitated the subject of "reform" extensively, labored hard to break down the presiding eldership and episcopacy, tormented himself with imaginary oppressions and evils, till his soul was completely embittered against the Church of his early choice and first love, and now he determined to leave, expecting to see the results of his toil, and the proofs of his magic influence, in the sweeping numbers that would rush after him into the new organization. At this point, he was sadly disappointed. Comparatively few followed him; many were disaffected in feeling, for a time, but the larger part discovered the folly of secession,

and refused to run off after abstractions. They soon became reconciled to the policy of the Church, stood firm, and prospered. If outward indications are to be relied on, Mr. S. has lived to see the day when he felt as little at home among "Radicals," as he ever did in the Methodist Episcopal Church; he has found abundant use for his talent of fault-finding, and not a few of his brethren have been made to feel the withering power of his sarcasm.

After reading these letters, brother Young insisted, saying, "Now you have the whole matter before you; the circuit is large, it contains many excellent members, some of them have their minds poisoned, and I want a man who has had some experience, to counteract the mischievous influence." My answer was, that it would damage me pecuniarily not less than a hundred dollars, and I could not go. Brother Swormstedt had previously traveled the circuit, and he urged me not to refuse. I yielded, and in ten days was off to the work. The quarterly meeting was held in Somerset; and on the day of its commencement I arrived in the place. That night I opened my ministry from 2 Tim. ii, 19: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure," etc. I had some light, but not much liberty. Our meeting was tolerably good, though some excitement prevailed on the subject of "Radicalism."

I was now fairly upon Fairfield circuit, with brother Jacob Young, preacher in charge. At that time this circuit extended into Fairfield, Licking, and Perry

counties, including the territory now embraced in Lancaster and Somerset stations, Rushville, West Rushville, Rehoboth, Baltimore, and Hebron circuits. We found, as already intimated, a good many whose minds were soured and strongly tinctured with radical notions, and our first aim was to "heal the breach." Brother Young administered the discipline judiciously, and with mildness, and I co-operated with him as best I could, seeking to keep the minds of the people on the cross of Christ, as well as to exhibit the beauty and efficiency of our Church polity. I preached at all the appointments, met the classes, and after class meeting would give a short lecture on the peculiarities of our Church government. I also sought private conversations with the disaffected ones, met their objections as well as I could, and in a short time we had the pleasure of seeing many that were leaning over, righted up again, and quietness generally restored. Mr. Springer traveled all over our bounds, preaching, visiting and laboring to propagate his faith, but only succeeded in organizing one class in our territory. That consisted of eleven members, and the brother they elected leader, the first time we preached where he formerly belonged, came forward, and with tears in his eyes, begged that his name might not be taken off the class-book; and that, I believe, was about the last of the class.

Shortly after commencing labor on this circuit, I discovered that, notwithstanding I had been preach-



ing from one to six times per week, the world was gaining too strong a hold upon my mind, and that my spirituality had proportionably declined. Then I concluded I must be a traveling preacher, or lose my soul. The world dwindled into insignificance, and I was enabled to say to its charms, farewell. I now determined to give my whole time to the work, drop the world, and trust all in the hands of God. "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" This solemn interrogatory was impressed with great force upon my heart. And I thank God that it was so; for, had I continued in secular employ, succeeded in business, accumulated property, and, consequently, fallen under the influence of worldly maxims and policy, the good Being only knows what the result would have been. But, in the providence of God, when this opening occurred, the good brethren pressed me to enter into the "open door." Here the cloud gathering in the spiritual heavens was revealed, and before the Sun of righteousness was hid from my vision, faith prevailed, and the impending storm was averted. The shadow of a cloud passed over my soul, and I was again light in the Lord. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people."

At the close of the year, in company with my

worthy colleague, I started to attend the session of the Ohio conference, which was to be held in Urbana. On our way, we attended brother Swormstedt's camp meeting, about one and a half miles below Columbus. The meeting was a deeply-interesting one. Brother Swormstedt was a good presiding officer, kept fine order, and was not opposed to shouting, when the people were ready to shout, being full of God. At this meeting I preached from Ephesians iii, 7-9. The Spirit helped my infirmities, and the grove was made vocal with the high praises of God. The camp meeting over, we went on to conference. This being the first session I attended in Ohio, was specially interesting to me. I formed acquaintance with many of the preachers, found them like those I left behind—men of God, sweetly united in the work of saving souls. The cordial welcome they gave me, made me feel that I was among brethren beloved. Thank heaven that it was my lot to become identified with these lovely men of God!

## CHAPTER XV.

## DELAWARE CIRCUIT—ONE YEAR.

MY name was now presented for re-admission into the traveling connection. My health had been somewhat impaired, by an attack of influenza, and some of the brethren thought I would not be able to endure the hardships of an itinerant life, in the west. The conference hesitated; just then the Rev. John Collins made some remarks on the subject—said he believed I was as able for the work as he was, when he was received, etc.; I was admitted, and appointed to the Delaware circuit, in company with brother S. P. Shaw. My colleague was dissatisfied with his appointment. On this account, his usefulness was hindered, in the forepart of the year, but, in the latter part, he did well. Rev. R. Bigelow was our presiding elder. I became acquainted with him when he was a boy, at his father's house, in Lower Canada. But he is too well known to need further notice from me. I will only add, that I can bear witness, from personal knowledge of his life and spirit, that, as a preacher, a diligent laborer, a man, and a meek disciple of Christ, he was all that others have said of him, and, even more. His name is embalmed in the hearts of all that knew him.



This was a heavy circuit. We had thirty-three appointments to be filled every twenty-eight days; and, when I say the roads were extremely bad, the old pioneers will know precisely what I mean. We went six miles above Bucyrus, and six miles below Delaware. Twice, during the winter, I was caught above Bucyrus, when heavy rains fell, covering the whole surface of the country with water, followed by severe cold, which made the roads a glare of ice. I rode thirty or forty miles when there was scarcely a rod not covered with it. We passed out through the beech woods, over the Salt Section, and down below Delaware. These trips were trying to man and horse. In Delaware, we preached in the court-house. We had a good congregation, and an excellent society. There were about sixty or seventy members, and they all met together for class. I never favored this plan, but it was very difficult then to "divide each society into smaller companies, called classes," as the Discipline directs. I recollect meeting class here, one day after preaching, when a number spoke of their desire to die happy. A good old Welsh brother arose and said, he heard a number express much concern about dying happy; "but," said he, "I have no anxiety about dying, my anxiety is all about living; for I know I shall die right, if I only live right." This is both Scriptural and philosophical. Many give themselves unnecessary pain about the dying hour. If all the anxious thought that is bestowed upon that point, were directed to a proper

regulation of the life, many more would die happy than really do. The true servants of Christ, need not be, "through fear of death, all their life-time subject to bondage." Only let this thought, "that, if we live right, we shall be sure to die right," become a matter of veritable faith, of fixed conviction, and we may be delivered from that servile fear, which hath torment. God help us to live for eternity!

At one point on the circuit, I experienced some difficulty in administering discipline. A man, highly esteemed among his neighbors, opposed me; but, as he is now done with the contentions of this life, I would only remark, that, however much the brethren respected this man, they proved, by rallying to its support, that they loved the Church more; and, by firmly co-operating together, we succeeded in carrying out the principles of Methodism. If discipline must be enforced, it is cheering to the preacher's heart, to find the membership ready to sustain him in its administration.

The first time I preached in Marion, I felt that God had a people in that place. At our first quarterly meeting I made a remark to that effect, adding, "I am after you, and, in the name of God, I will have you!" A man, in the congregation, said to himself, as he afterward told me, "Well, old fellow, you will not catch me, at any rate." Yet he was among the first to approach the altar of prayer—was happily converted, and become a useful member of the Church. The strong man armed keepeth his

goods in safety, but when a stronger than he is come, the strong man is bound, etc.; that is, when a man rests in carnal security, he scorns the weakness of those who repent and pray, but, when the Spirit of God takes hold of his heart, then he finds himself so miserable and vile, that he cries out, "O, wretched man that I am!" Breaking off from his sins, by righteousness, and from his iniquities, by turning unto the Lord, he finds that, "With God there is forgiveness, that he may be feared." We were favored with a very good revival in this place.

In the fall, my colleague and myself attended a camp meeting among the Wyandotts, at the mission. The sight of these red brethren, coming on to the ground, pitching their tents, and making ready for the worship of God, filled my heart with gratitude. As I looked upon their sobriety, order, and devotion, I could but exclaim, "What hath God wrought!" They paid strict attention to all the preaching, sung the songs of Zion most delightfully, and their prayers were fervent, full of faith and the Holy Ghost. Their exhortations were full of fire—the fire that kindles in the soul—that runs from heart to heart, encircling all in a flame of love. I felt it burning in my own soul, as I mingled in their devotions, and, thank God! it made me feel clever! They were addressed on the subject of missions, and responded in the sum of forty dollars. They had the true missionary spirit. One of them, in speaking of the Gospel being brought to them, and of the change it had wrought for the



better, exclaimed, "And, now I feel like giving it another push!" I noticed a young chief, perhaps eighteen years of age; he was covered with rings, beads, and all the tinsels and gew-gaws, found among the wild sons of the forest; when he walked he appeared to cover over more ground than any person I ever saw. I could but contrast him with the converted Indians. In looking at his pride, and their humility, the change wrought by Divine grace, was fully manifest.

I have attended a great many camp meetings, but for order, devotion, and happiness, I have never seen this one excelled. These Indians were a pattern for any congregation, worshipping in the wilderness or in the city. And let me say that the sisters spread as white linen upon their tables, as ever graced the tented grove. I left the ground with feelings which I can never describe. Halleluiah to God! The degraded, abused red man can be saved! The redeeming grace of God has already housed many of them in heaven, and many more are on their way! This is no fiction. God is no respecter of persons, and the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. "O, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men!" But the marks of improvement in their condition, attributable to their having received the Gospel, were not confined to the camp-ground, or their solemn assemblies. We passed through their country, and

on beholding their neat, well-finished houses and barns, their clean yards, high fences, well-cultivated fields, and luxuriant corn, were led to praise God on their behalf. What we witnessed was sufficient to convince the most skeptical of the practicability of Christianizing and civilizing this portion of our fallen race.

We had a camp meeting on our circuit this year; it was a tolerably good meeting, though nothing of special interest transpired. The year closed pleasantly, and we took our departure, leaving many friends behind, whom we shall no more see till the day of eternity dawns upon us. I had reason for thanksgiving to God that myself and family—still living on my little farm in Berkshire—had been graciously spared another year. I received one hundred and thirty-seven dollars for my services on the circuit; and the stewards' book revealed the fact that ninety dollars more had been raised on the circuit than any previous year. My predecessors had close living.

In September, 1830, the conference sat in Lancaster, Ohio—Bishop Soule presiding. The business of the conference was transacted with harmony and dispatch. On Sabbath, the Bishop preached a powerful sermon from the words, "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," etc.; many were made to feel and tremble at the word. After the sermon, the newly-elected deacons were ordained. In the afternoon, the Rev. T. A. Morris—now Bishop—preached one of his plain, instructive, forcible

ble sermons, after which occurred the service of ordaining elders. On one evening of the session, the somewhat eccentric A. W. Elliott preached on, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," etc.; under this sermon, the congregation manifested deep feeling. The speaker, as usual, threw his whole soul into his subject, and God attended the word with power. The next day brother Elliot's character was examined, and he asked that his relation to the conference—he was superannuated—might be continued. The Bishop remarked, "Brethren, I am not a superannuated man, but if I should preach as brother Elliott did last night, I soon would be." Brother E. was an impulsive man; what he attempted to do at all, he did with all his might; and sometimes he made draughts upon his physical strength, such as the stoutest constitution could not bear without detriment. He wielded a powerful influence in the days of his strength, and has doubtless won many souls to the Redeemer's praise.

At the close of this conference, I was sent to the Pickaway circuit, the head of which was Circleville. Brother Baird, who was just admitted on trial, was my colleague; and that faithful old pioneer, the now sainted John Collins, was my presiding elder. Brother Baird was a blessed, good man, and a promising preacher; but his race was short. In March following, he died in sight of heaven, and I preached his funeral sermon. It was a deeply solemn time. I dwelt on the words, "Let me die the death of the



righteous, and let my last end be like his." The deceased brother had greatly endeared himself to many on the circuit, and to me in particular; we mourned his departure with unaffected grief. The event led me to close self-examination; I purposed to live better, to be more useful, that I also might be fully ready when summoned away.

My circuit lying fifty miles from home, with several unbridged streams between, rendered it necessary that my family should move to the circuit; but there was no parsonage, and no house provided for the preacher's family. I rented a room and moved in, drew up a subscription-paper, and purposed to build a preachers' house. Some noble-hearted brethren and sisters pledged assistance, and I went about it with good hope of success. The members in Circleville were just building a church, had it up and roofed, and thought they had all they could do to finish that. At the first quarterly meeting conference, I called attention to the subject, but none were willing to take hold of it; I then drew out my subscription-paper, and read the names and amounts pledged. Upon seeing the encouragement given from distant parts of the circuit, the friends in town took hold in earnest, and we succeeded in the enterprise—not fully, however, till my second year. The most liberal subscriptions were from Grooms' neighborhood, on Walnut creek; an appointment now called Hopewell, on Groveport circuit. But the progress of the work here, will occupy another chapter.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## PICKAWAY CIRCUIT—TWO YEARS.

THE Pickaway circuit, at this time, was pretty large. It embraced most of Pickaway county, and part of Franklin, Ross, and Fairfield counties. We preached at Richmond, Londonderry, and at a point six miles below Chillicothe, in Ross, came up to Lithopolis in Fairfield, and to Hopewell, in Franklin; including, of course, the territory now occupied by Kingston and Royalton circuits, and Circleville station.

Though the circuit was large, the country had been settled longer, and the roads were better, than on the Delaware circuit. We set out with earnestness to explore the ground, to ascertain the condition of the work, and to get ready for a "winter campaign." We had sufficient room; and upon learning where our efforts were most needed, we went into it, calculating to be limited in our exertions, only by our capability of endurance. The blessing of God rested upon us, and our labors were crowned with success.

In the month of February, we held a protracted meeting in Circleville. As our meeting-house was in an unfinished state, we occupied the court-house.

The weather was extremely cold. As I was administering the sacrament of the Lord's supper, it seemed to me that my fingers would freeze. That night there was a move in the congregation; we called for mourners, and they came, evincing the depth and sincerity of their convictions, by confessing their sins, and pleading earnestly for divine mercy. The membership came up delightfully, "to the help of the Lord," and we continued the meeting, day and night, for three weeks. Many souls were born into the kingdom of Christ. We closed up with one hundred and twenty accessions to the Church. This was one of the best revivals I ever had in any one place.

In Royalton, religion was at a low ebb, though there were some good members in society. We made arrangements to hold a protracted meeting with them. The services commenced on Friday night. On Saturday, we had preaching at 11 o'clock, and in the afternoon. At the close of this sermon, I sat out a bench, and invited any who wished an interest in the prayers of the Church, to come forward. There was a complete rush; many started from the back part of the house, and, before reaching the place of kneeling, some threw up their arms and cried out, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" This was a time of unusual power. Some were converted in the space of ten minutes from the time they approached the place of prayer. Many were enabled to say, "O Lord, I will praise thee: for though thou wast angry with



me, thine anger is turned away; and now thou dost comfort me." The whole Church were made to rise and shine, their light being come, and the glory of the Lord having risen upon them. I never knew so many conversions, in so short a time, under similar circumstances.

Some do not believe in such sudden conversions; but it seems to me we ought not to be concerned about the manner of the Lord's work, so it is done, and the people saved. The question is not whether we would expect God to work powerfully and rapidly in the hearts of some, but whether he has done it. As to the possibility of it, there can be no question, for we dare not limit the Holy One. It is, therefore, simply a question of fact, as to whether he ever does produce the moral change in the soul by a sudden manifestation of regenerating power; and the fact is to be determined by the experience of those who profess such conversion, and not by the experience, or want of experience, of those who make no such profession. And it is not at all improper to look into the Scriptures for precedents in this matter. If God did once convert sinners suddenly, he may do so again. Thus, the scenes of the day of Pentecost, when the Gospel ministry was fully opened, the conversion of Saul, and numerous other instances of quick conversions, will be in point. But just here I call to mind a conversation had with a person who objected to so much "confusion." Said I, "Do you not think there was some 'confusion' on the day of

Pentecost, when three thousand were pricked in their hearts, and cried out, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?'" "O yes," was the reply; "but then that was in the days of the apostles, and we don't look for such things now." "No," said I, "you don't look for them, and you don't have them; for the Scriptural rule, 'according to your faith, so be it unto you,' is perfectly true; but we do look for them, and we do experience them." Here is the secret of the matter: the opposers of sudden conversions are unwilling to take Scriptural precedents; they do not expect *such* conversions as are recorded in the New Testament; they do not look for them, they do not desire them, and hence they do not have them; and because *they* know nothing about them, in their unbelief, they are unwilling to credit the testimony of those who claim to know. Like the Jews of old, they close their eyes to the evidences they have, and persistently require a sign from heaven! The meeting in Royalton continued several days, resulting in over twenty accessions to the Church. I then invited all who felt interested in having a house of worship, to meet me at the school-house, to see what could be done. The result was, we had a good church built; and now they have, in that place, a parsonage, and it is the headquarters of the circuit.

We had an old church about four miles above Chillicothe, in the Crouse neighborhood, which was called Lakin's Chapel. Near this lived father Crouse, who was getting old—was wealthy, and retiring from busi-

ness. He was building a house in Kingston, a beautiful little village, ten miles from Chillicothe, and was very anxious to have a Methodist society organized there. After conversing with the old gentleman in relation to the matter, I determined to establish an appointment in the place, and take it into the regular plan of the circuit. We collected a few members who lived in the vicinity, formed a small class, and God added to their numbers by happy conversions; so that, before the year closed, we had a society of forty members, sweetly united in spirit, worshipping God, and walking in the light of his truth. But more of this hereafter.

I was especially interested in the society on Little Walnut, before alluded to as the Hopewell appointment on Groveport circuit. This was a large, flourishing society, established, in a very early day, by Rev. James Quinn. Here were parents, children, and grandchildren, all united in Church fellowship, and laboring to sustain the Church by building up the cause of religion at home, and by contributing to her benevolent operations abroad. I have been intimately acquainted in this neighborhood for twenty-six years, and it gives me peculiar pleasure to look over the past and review my associations with this people. As in every other neighborhood, time has wrought many changes. Some of the older members have died in the faith and gone to heaven, some have emigrated to the far west, others have built a neat brick church, and now worship at Locust Grove,



about two miles from Hopewell; but still there is a goodly company left, who, retaining the spirit of their fathers, "walk by the same rule, minding the same things" These have a good house of worship, *keep it neat and clean*, attend regularly the means of grace, bestow proper attention upon the Sabbath school, and never fail to meet their proportion of circuit expenses; but, in doing this, the leaders have to put their hands pretty deeply into their own pockets. They calculate to "foot the bill," whatever it may be after having made their regular collections. But this noble generosity on the part of official members sometimes operates injuriously, not to the general cause, but to particular individuals. Members come to think it matters little whether they pay their "little mite" or not; the demands will all be met, at any rate; the society will not suffer in credit, nor the preachers in pocket, though they hold on to their pittance; thus virtually taking it out of their neighbor's pocket! "It is more blessed to give than to receive;" and those who neglect their own duty because others are more liberal than themselves, rob their own souls of the richest benedictions of Heaven.

At my first visit to Lithopolis, I met with Dr. Minor, with whom I had formed a slight acquaintance in Vermont. The Doctor showed me no little kindness; and, from that day to this, I have been made welcome to the hospitality of his house, whenever I visited that place. He has shown himself a substantial friend, and I trust he will yet obtain the mercy

of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. We had a good society in that place; but Methodism has found much to contend with in that region. The population was made up, in good part, of German Lutherans, whose prejudices against Methodism were very strong. Many of them were good citizens, and exerted a powerful influence in the community. Nevertheless, some such have been converted, and now form the bone and sinew of the Methodist Church. It is by no means uncommon that persons educated in an opposite faith, and taught to hate Methodism from their youth, when they experience an evangelical conversion, become her warmest admirers, and most unflinching supporters.

During this year, I had the pleasure of attending several camp meetings. The first was a very good meeting, held in conjunction with Rev. E. H. Field, of the Adelphi circuit, for the benefit of his charge and mine. From this, in company with the presiding elder, I went to one on the Deer Creek circuit, held on the old camp-ground at White Brown's. Old brother Brown and his companion were pioneers in Methodism; they were emphatically "old-fashioned Methodists;" for many long years their house stood open to receive the toiling itinerant, and many of the old soldiers have been refreshed and gladdened within their truly Christian habitation. But now they dwell in the "house not made with hands," and their children, rising up to call them blessed, delight to follow their godly example. The meeting was

such as were only witnessed in the tented grove, when Christians met to worship in the simplicity of true devotion. From this, I accompanied brother Collins to a similar meeting in the Hillsboro circuit. This was held on the old Rattlesnake camp-ground, under the direction of Revs. G. Maley and G. W. Walker, circuit preachers. This also was a season of great interest and power. The people present on Sabbath were estimated at seven thousand. The presiding elder appointed me to preach that day at eleven o'clock. Why he did so, I can not tell—perhaps it was because I was a stranger in that part, and had a clear, strong voice. The latter was a qualification by no means unessential, on such an occasion. During the day, the attention was good, considering the vast numbers on the ground; and the interest increased as the meeting advanced, till one hundred and forty gave their names as probationers for membership, before the services closed. The membership were not there to vie with each other in displaying fine clothing and setting extravagant tables, but to worship the God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, and of Moses, in the wilderness, and to labor for the salvation of precious, blood-bought sinners. God was there in very deed, and his word was with power.

On returning to my circuit, I found the good work still prospering. I received between three and four hundred on trial that year, most of whom stood fast in the faith of the Gospel. It was a blessed year.



I look back upon it with gratitude to God, who poured out his blessing so freely upon my humble efforts, making them instrumental in the accomplishment of good. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God, and not of us." To his name be the glory forever! Amen.

The quarterage claims were all met. When the hearts of the people are open to receive Christ, the spirit of liberality prevails to such an extent that the management of the financial concerns of the Church becomes an easy matter. The people were alive in religion, and not backward to duty; abounding in the other graces, they abounded also in the grace of liberality. Committing my flock to the care of the great Shepherd above, I made ready for another session of conference. This was held, September 8, 1831, in Mansfield, Ohio, Bishop Hedding presiding.

The reports at this conference showed that the year had been one of general prosperity, there being over four thousand of an increase in our bounds. My heart prompts me to speak of the Bishop—but since Dr. Clark has given so faithful a portraiture of the man, of his life and times, all of which every one acquainted with him can fully indorse—such a notice as I could give would be superfluous. The session was a very pleasant one. I was returned to Pickaway circuit, with Rev. Jacob Dixon for my colleague. He was an excellent preacher, possessed

considerable talent, but was wanting in economy; he therefore found much trouble in supporting his family on the income allotted to a Methodist preacher. Our presiding elder this year was Rev. Augustus Eddy. He is well known in Ohio and Indiana as a faithful, laborious minister of the Gospel. In 1831, he was in the vigor of life; he was humble, devoted, persevering—beloved by the preachers of his district, and highly esteemed among the people. He is yet upon the walls of Zion in Indiana—but doubtless begins to feel the advances of age, and looks forward to his discharge from the militant service, as not very distant. He has done a goodly share of pioneer work, contributed much to the advancement of religion where he has labored, and his name will live, richly embalmed in the affections of children's children, when he shall rest from his labors, in the paradise of God. "The memory of the just is blessed."

Father Crouse had now moved into Kingston, and was laboring with a large heart for the advantage of the Church. He purchased a house and two lots, put up an addition to the house, built a stable, and then gave it all to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The citizens had, several years before, erected a brick building, which was partly finished, and used for public business, schools, preaching, etc. Father Crouse bought it, remodeled and enlarged it, making it suitable for the worship of God, and deeded it to the Church. In this he might have received some

small contributions from others, but the main expense was borne by himself. The Lakin Chapel was getting old, and, on account of the burying-ground connected with it, father Crouse was anxious to have it kept up; he therefore gave fifteen hundred dollars for building a new house at that place. After distributing these and other munificent benefactions, the old man fell asleep in Jesus; but his name and his works still live. "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

Not the least responsible part of our work, this year, was the training, indoctrinating, Methodizing the converts of the previous year. These generally did well; some became useful members, and some, ere this, have finished their course, and "passed, through death, triumphant home." We were favored with some prosperity this year. Souls were converted at several places.

At one point, the members neglected to attend class. I visited the delinquents, admonished them of the error of their ways, pleaded with them to come up to the work, and be Methodists—but all to no purpose; they seemed intent on breaking down the rule on that subject, so far as they were concerned. I then cited them to appear before the society, and give a reason for their course; they did not appear. I then read the clause of Discipline, bearing on the case, and called upon those who believed the accused were guilty of violating the rule, to manifest it by raising their hand—not a hand was raised. "What!"



said I, "are persons not guilty of breach of rule, who absent themselves from class for six months, and then refuse to assign any reason when called upon?" I informed them, that, as I differed from them in judgment, I should refer the case to the quarterly conference. But, rather than have the case referred, they reconsidered their action, and voted them guilty; the delinquents were, accordingly, set aside for breach of rule. This case illustrates the importance of the rule which gives the preacher the power of reference, when he disagrees with the majority, before whom the accused person is brought. But for the existence of it, these notoriously delinquent persons would have been retained in the Church, through the influence of merely personal partiality, or local prejudice.

Down, on the southern end of the work, I found several excellent families, of whom I would like to speak, did space permit. Old brother King and his whole family were of the right stamp. Here, also, were the Joneses, Gundys, Buns, Orrs, and many others—all striving for the "better land." I shall never forget their kindnesses and Christian fellowship. They loved God and his Church—stood up for Methodism in its primitive simplicity; and sustained me nobly in the administration of Discipline. But, soon the grave will close over the last of the old stock.

"On this side, and on that, we see our friends  
Drop off, like leaves in autumn!"

I call up the pleasing sensations experienced in conversation with these old friends, and can scarcely realize, that a quarter of a century has dropped into eternity, since their familiar faces and friendly voices cheered my heart; but, so it is; time, like an ever-flowing stream, moves swiftly on, bearing us rapidly to the ocean of eternity! At the close of my second year, I found myself even more attached to the people than ever before. I gave to many the parting hand, to meet no more on earth. Some have made a good escape from earth—some still linger, amid the storms of this tempestuous world, looking out, in cheerful hope, to the clime where all is calm and sunshine; but, perchance, others have made shipwreck of faith, and are now stumbling upon the dark mountains!

“ Brief time,

Advances quick, in tread; few hours, and dark,

Remain: those hours, in frivolous employ,

Waste not impertinent; they ne’er return!

Nor deem it dullness to stand still, and pause,

When dread eternity has claims so high.”

## CHAPTER XVII.

## DEER CREEK CIRCUIT—TWO YEARS.

IN September, 1832, I received my appointment to Deer Creek circuit, with brother J. A. Reader, for my colleague. Brother Reader was a pleasant companion, a good man, and an acceptable preacher. I moved my family to Old Town—now Frankfort—in Ross county.

The circuit was large, but in good condition; our predecessors, J. H. Power and J. Gurley, were diligent workers, and left the charge as it should be. The territory is now divided into Frankfort, New Holland, and Deer Creek circuits—each sustaining two preachers, and affording work enough to keep them well employed. The village of Old Town was one of the oldest places in that part of the country; it occupied the site of an Indian village, and was originally called Chillicothe. Methodism was planted there in an early day, by some of the pioneers who penetrated the wilderness, upon the very heels of the first settlers, and preached Christ to them, in their yet unfinished cabins. We found there a good society of plain Methodists—some of them wealthy and liberal; indeed, the membership on the circuit generally, would compare favorably with that of any other field.



The members flocked around us, giving us a most cheering reception. The steward, living in the place, called and inquired whether we would like any financial aid before the quarterly meeting; and thus, in the very outset, we were inspired with confidence, and impressed, favorably, toward the people of the charge. And, how delightful to the itinerant, on leaving an affectionate people, and moving among strangers, to be greeted with such manifestations of Christian regard! Would that all our people understood how much depends on this! If the membership would call upon the preachers, immediately upon their arrival—show them a cheerful countenance—lend them a helping hand, in settling in their new home, exhibiting the religion they profess, they would be much more likely to have preachers with frank, warm hearts, strongly attached to their flocks, than by pursuing the course which is now far too common. People often complain that their preachers do not visit them enough. I wish to say that, in my judgment, there is nothing so well calculated to induce a preacher to come up to the line of duty, in the way of pastoral visiting, as the simple and easy method above indicated, of making him feel at home, when he first arrives upon his circuit or station. And, on the other hand, there is nothing which so discourages him, and renders this duty embarrassing, and unpleasant, as to leave him to *hunt up* his strange members, and *thrust* himself upon their acquaintance, without any previous knowledge as to whether they

desire it or not. Preachers are but men; and, many of them start in the work with timidity and embarrassment; and, being held at a distance, by the people, or compelled to put themselves forward, to seek acquaintance with the members, and then finding much formality and stiffness of manners to encounter, confirms, in them, habits of backwardness, and actual dislike to this most important, and what should be the most pleasing, part of their work. These remarks are made after years of experience and observation; and I am fully persuaded that reform is needed, and that reform, on the part of the people, will be speedily followed by reform on the part of the pastors.

Shortly after locating my family in Old Town, the Rev. Mr. J——, of the Baptist Church, called upon me, and expressed a desire to be friendly with all denominations. We conversed together freely, and with much interest, on the subject of religion. He informed me that he had abandoned the old doctrine of limited atonement, and believed that Christ died for all—that all might be saved if they would. Thus far we agreed well. But he went on to say that men have natural ability to repent and believe the Gospel. Here I was compelled to dissent. I could not believe that fallen, depraved human nature, possessed any such excellent capability—for I was a firm believer in the doctrine of total depravity. I believed the words of Christ, “Without me, ye can do nothing.” I told him that

if men have natural ability to perform the moral duties they owe to God, they might exercise that natural ability and go to heaven without grace. He still insisted that we have "natural ability." I told him that if he meant by that phrase—physical ability—to chop wood, or to lift a man out or thrust him into the gutter, I would acknowledge that we have it; but even this we have through the atonement of Christ, to whom we owe all we have, and it is therefore of grace, after all, "and not of works, lest any man should boast." He then said he believed, as he heard me preach a few evenings before, that religion was the one thing needful, and that it is a matter of choice, "but the change comes before," said he. Here is a strange paradox: Religion is a matter of choice—but the heart must be changed before the choice can be made. This is much like the common blunder of Calvinists, in placing regeneration before faith. I pointed him to a water-mill, with its ponderous wheel moving beneath the running stream. Said I, "That wheel appears to move freely, but a glance at the impelling cause found in the current above, shows that its motion is necessitated; and this is the sort of freedom you allow to man. Religion is a matter of choice, but the choice can not be made till God changes the heart—that is, man has the power of choice after his heart is changed, but has no such power antecedent to the change; what then becomes of your natural ability—what is it all worth?" We



conversed on many points of doctrine, sometimes seeing alike, and sometimes not. Old-fashioned, unadulterated Calvinism, which disrobes man of all moral freedom, and degrades him to the pitiful condition of absolute passivity, may be arranged into a harmonious system, though it be without any true foundation to rest upon; but when men attempt to modify it—to throw out the repulsive parts, and introduce some truth into it—they mar its harmony, and present a conglomeration of incongruities. There is no middle ground between Calvinism and Arminianism. Man is free or bound, the atonement is limited or universal, the decrees of God are absolute or conditional; there is no such thing as modifying the old-fashioned absolutism of Calvin and Augustine, so as to blend it with some of the great truths of the Gospel. Truth and error will not blend; there is between them an irreconcilable enmity, and whenever they are brought in contact, the antagonism will show itself. Men may talk as much as they please about moderate Calvinists, modified Calvinism, etc.; I want none of it, unless I take it all. None of the modern improvements on the out-and-out predestinarianism of Calvin, could get a foot-hold in his day; one glance of his mighty intellect would detect the adulteration, and one stroke of his masterly logic was sufficient to banish it forever. Surely, if the old man were living, and could examine the *mixtures* of theology, with which his name is associated, and in support of which his

learning, piety, and zeal are invoked, he would cry out in righteous indignation against the abuse.

We found plenty to do on the circuit; but to particularize, would be but to detail the every-day life of the Methodist preacher, much of which has already been done. Much of the same variety of riding in the cold and heat, wet and dry, and finding good, bad, and medium accommodations, with the labor of preaching, praying, visiting, etc., which made up former years, occupied us during our stay on this circuit. We had a camp meeting near New Holland; but, though it was a good meeting, I remember nothing that transpired worthy of special record.

The Rev. Charles C. Lybrand was my colleague in Deer Creek circuit, the second year. He is still in the active work of the ministry—an amiable, consistent Methodist preacher. We labored together in great harmony, and with reasonable success. We took in a new preaching-place this year, in the village of Williamsport. This was in the midst of a New-Light community. (I intend no disrespect in using this term; the word “Christian” is too general to be distinctive.) After preaching several times in a cabin, where we were cramped for room, I was invited to preach in the New-Light church. To this I consented, with the understanding that I should feel at full liberty to preach the doctrine of our Church, without hinderance. Accordingly I announced that at such a time, I would preach on the

Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The term deity was used in preference to divinity, because many that regard the Savior as a created, dependent being, call him divine, because he was divinely inspired, as were Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, and Paul. A large audience assembled, including four or five "Christian" preachers, with paper and pencils to take notes. My sermon was much the same as the one the substance of which is given in this work. Rev. Mr. Harvey said, at the close, that he was to have replied to the discourse, but the house was so full and the weather so warm, he thought best to postpone the reply for three weeks. He then said, "If I do not show that Christ is a distinct being from the Father, we will give it up." I immediately remarked, "You must disprove that Christ is God, or it will be no reply to my discourse." The time came, and a large congregation assembled. Mr. H. spent nearly two hours in proving that Christ was the Son of God, and in some sense distinct from, and inferior to, the Father. This he called a refutation of my discourse. I rose and remarked, "It is too evident to be called in question, that Mr. H. is blessed with the gift of continuance; he has spent nearly two hours in his professed reply, which is no reply at all to what I advanced. I dwelt on the Deity of Christ; he dwelt on the humanity of Christ. I proved that Christ is God; he has been proving that Christ is man: this he calls a refutation! To illustrate: Suppose I deliver a discourse proving that the soul of man is



immortal, and Mr. H. proposes to refute it; he proceeds to prove that the body is mortal, and calls that a refutation of my argument; would you admit his claim to be legitimate? It could not be a refutation, because both positions are correct—and they are not incompatible; so in this case, Christ is both God and man; and proving him man no more disproves that he is God, than proving the body mortal disproves the immortality of the soul. Here are two distinct points of doctrine. I dwelt on one, and Mr. H. on the other; but both are equally true!" I then noticed a few points in his argument which I thought deserved attention, and closed. One point I will give: Mr. H. called up the common objection to his hypothesis, that if Christ be not God, we can not worship him without being guilty of idolatry. Said he, "We do worship Christ, and we have no fears of being accounted idolaters therefor—because God commands us to worship him." "That is an excellent thought," said I. "Just look at it: God says, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,' but he also commands us to worship Christ—therefore Christ is God, or we are commanded to worship what is not God!"

We succeeded in organizing a good society in the place; now they have a pretty good Church, and stand as a prominent point on the circuit. The truth—Bible truth, will prevail; it has God for its author, and salvation for its end; it will become a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death.

In conclusion, I will say that the two years spent on Deer Creek circuit, were pleasant years to me, and not altogether without prosperity. Since then I have frequently had the pleasure of meeting with some of the old friends on that circuit, and their cordial press of the hand always betokened the sincerity of their friendship. I shall ever cultivate the memory of their kindness while with them, and hope to meet them again in heaven.

“This glorious hope revives  
Our courage by the way ;  
While each in expectation lives,  
And longs to see the day.  
From sorrow, toil, and pain,  
And sin, we shall be free ;  
And perfect love and friendship reign  
Through all eternity.”

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## ONE YEAR WITHOUT REGULAR WORK.

IN September, 1834, our conference sat in Circleville. At this session, I asked to be left without an appointment, on account of family afflictions. My oldest son had been suffering from pulmonary consumption for about fourteen months; his wife was disabled, through ill health, from giving him the attention he needed; and their means were exhausted, so that they could not provide for themselves. It was clearly my duty to take care of them; but this I could not do, and, at the same time, perform regular pastoral work. I was wanted for Portsmouth station; but a station I never desired. However, I should have felt it my duty to fill, as well as possible, any appointment assigned me by the appointing power, if sickness had not interfered.

The request excited some debate in the conference. Some were opposed to granting it, because they saw no Disciplinary provision for such a case. I was not, myself, worn-out or disabled, and did not want a superannuated or a supernumerary relation to the conference; but that, while my name stood upon the effective list, I should simply be left without an appointment. Some of my best friends thought it con-



trary to our economy to grant such a request—that it would establish a bad precedent, etc.; but the majority were of opinion that if there were no Disciplinary provision made expressly for such cases, it was clearly within the discretionary power of the conference to grant the request, and that it ought to be done; they voted accordingly, and I was left at liberty to bestow all my attention upon the wants and afflictions of my family. I immediately proceeded to the residence of my son, settled up his business, and moved him and family home to my own house. It was now our daily concern to make him as comfortable as possible, the short time he had to live. He lingered with us, suffering and rejoicing, till the 24th of March, 1835, when he pushed off “life’s ambiguous shore,” in full prospect of a better inheritance beyond the grave. His last words were those of the poet—

“Never will I remove  
Out of ——”

Here his voice failed, and he uttered no more. The whole verse which he attempted to quote, reads—

“Never will I remove  
Out of his hands my cause;  
But rest in thy redeeming love,  
And hang upon thy cross.”

Thus departed our first-born, in the 32d year of his age. To those who never experienced a like affliction, I would say, you know not the sorrow, the

crushing anguish that parents feel, upon the loss of a son or daughter. You may imagine you sympathize with them, but you can not realize the bereavement of their hearts. But then, there is One whose eye can see the silent workings of the soul, behold all the unuttered grief; who looks upon the secret springs of sorrow, and always looks with tenderness. There is One whose heart can feel the very depth of human woe, whose compassion is infinite, whose sympathy is divine; to him we looked for succor, and we looked not in vain: "For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." Our hearts were truly stricken and sorrowful; but we sung—

"Courage, my soul; thy bitter cross,  
In every trial here,  
Shall bear thee to thy heaven above,  
But shall not enter there.

The sighing ones, that humbly seek  
In sorrowing paths below,  
Shall in eternity rejoice,  
Where endless comforts flow."

Without faith in divine Providence, we should have been utterly desolate and comfortless; but, knowing that God is too wise to err, too powerful to be defeated, and too good to be unkind, we bowed in submission to this stroke, saying, "Thy will be done." If his wisdom sees, his goodness provides, and his power executes, what is best, why should we not trust in him and not be afraid?

I was now at liberty to go out into the field, and

join the brethren in the "battle-cry." In company with brother Eddy, I attended quarterly meeting in Columbus—preached twice during the meeting; once from John xv, 14, and again from the 4th Psalm. On Sabbath, brother Eddy preached a powerful sermon. The power of the Lord was in the assembly to apply the word, and good was done in the name of Christ. Brother Eddy being detained on Church business, I went on to his next quarterly meeting, which was in Granville. I preached on Saturday, from Phil. i, 6: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it till the day of Jesus Christ." On Sabbath, at 11 o'clock, I dwelt upon 2 Timothy ii, 19. This was one of my happiest visits to Granville. I shall never forget it. Brother Joseph Carper was on this work, and had been favored with considerable revival influence. This meeting wound up with a fine ingathering of souls, and I trust many of them will land safely in the better world. During the meeting, we went down to the creek and administered baptism to eight or ten persons. Leaving Granville, I went to Newark, where I preached from Jeremiah viii, 22. This was a very good meeting. Here I met with brother L. White, then stationed in Lancaster. Upon invitation from him, I attended his quarterly meeting the next Saturday and Sabbath. It was a profitable season. I endeavored to expound Luke xiii, 24. From this place, I accompanied brother Eddy to a camp meeting, below Kingston. The meeting was a de-



lightful one, although my own enjoyments were not so good as usual.

I now returned home, and assisted the preachers on the circuit where my family lived, in holding protracted meetings, etc., till conference. It was to me a year of sacrifice, toil, and affliction; but I felt that I was in the line of duty, and therefore in the path of safety. In the midst of all, I could say, with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Thank God that it is written, "All things work together for good to them that love God!" May he still protect and keep us humble before him!

"Glad frames too often lift us up,  
And then how proud we grow!  
Till sad desertion makes us droop,  
And down we sink as low.

He that is down, need fear no fall;  
He that is low, no pride;  
He that is humble, ever shall  
Have God to be his guide."

## CHAPTER XIX.

## MARIETTA AND ADELPHI CIRCUITS.

IN September, 1835, conference sat in Springfield, Bishop Soule presiding. My appointment was to Marietta. M. P. Kellogg was my colleague. He had previously belonged to the Presbyterian Church, in which he was a distinguished revivalist—something after the style of the Rev. Mr. Finney. He was constantly inclined to *get up revivals*, by some sort of maneuvering; some of his plans were admirable, but others, I could not approve. I considered him a pious, good man; he read the Bible on his knees more than any man of my acquaintance; but he was impulsive, hasty, and sometimes very inconsiderate in his movements; he subsequently got into difficulty, was suspended for a year, and then permitted to locate. The last I heard of him, he was preaching in another branch of the Church. I trust he will find rest in heaven. We labored together harmoniously, and had a good work on the circuit. Brother Kellogg was undoubtedly a useful man in that day. Having purchased a home, and located my family in Kingston, my work was one hundred and five miles from my residence. While in Marietta, I boarded with brother Crawford, an excellent local

preacher, in whose kind family I found agreeable entertainment. Marietta was the point at which the first settlements in Ohio commenced. The people were mostly of the New England stock, and to this day they retain many of the customs of Yankeeedom. Some of these peculiarities are worthy of imitation every-where. They cultivate taste in arranging their houses, barns, yards, gardens, fences, etc.; so that their residences are characterized by order, neatness, and comfort. There is a college in the place of good reputation; it is under Presbyterian control, and has sent out a large number of graduates, who, as teachers, preachers, and members of other professions, occupy positions of usefulness and honor, and may be justly esteemed blessings to the country. I bless God for sanctified learning! All true science links the soul to God. Leave him out of the account, and philosophy loses its sublimity, and sinks into blind conjecture. And our holy Bible courts the light. Its author is the author of all things; He who inspired the prophets, hung the world upon nothing, spread abroad the heavens, ordained the laws of gravitation, and upholds all things by the word of his power. The study of science, is but the study of God. The heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth his handy work. The rocky pages of geology beneath our feet, and the shining stars above our heads, alike display the wisdom, power, and glory of that God whose loving kindness the Bible reveals.



Marietta was a half-station; we preached there every Sabbath morning, and in Point Harmer in the afternoon. In the winter, I held a protracted meeting on the Marietta side, which resulted in the happy conversion of a goodly number of souls, who united with us in Church fellowship. We had some revival influence at nearly every appointment on the circuit. We also raised money and built two churches in the course of the year.

The first and last slave case I ever had any thing to do with, occurred in Marietta this year. A member of the Church in Virginia, who owned a number of slaves, sold them, and came here and commenced living in princely style, on the price of blood. I had him arraigned under our General Rule which forbids the buying or selling men, women, and children with the intention of enslaving them; he was found guilty and expelled the Church—but took an appeal, and pleaded nearly two hours in his own defense; the appeal was not sustained; so he remained expelled, becoming very bitter against me for the part I took in administering the Discipline against him. It was truly a sad spectacle to see a man professing Christianity, guilty of the black crime of selling his fellow-beings into slavery, stand up to justify the deed before an ecclesiastical court. In slave states such things may yet be done, but I mistake the signs of the times if the light of truth does not yet put an end to scenes so humiliating, even there. The spirit of freedom, flowing on with

a deep, smooth current, will rise and extend, till it spreads over all the area of oppression, inundating our whole land with a flood of glory. Sectional animosity, and political strife, may, for a time, impede its progress; but, like every running, living stream, it will gather strength, surmount every obstacle, and sweep away every obstruction. May God hasten the day when the Church, the state, and nation, shall be freed from the curse of slavery! The prospect looks forbidding, but we may still hope, for God reigns.

But this, no less than the last, was a year of trial and deep family affliction. God saw fit to remove by death another of our sons. He was in the twenty-third year of his age, doing business in Kingston, possessed a good mind, was well educated, and—permit a father to say it—was highly esteemed in the community. He was scrupulously moral and upright. The Rev. S. Hamilton said if there was ever any one retained his infantile justification, he was the person; but he deferred a profession of religion, till the spring he died. While he was yet in good health, he wrote me as follows: “I have, at last, joined the Church. I did not do it in the time of excitement, nor in an excited moment; I joined because I wanted to be a Methodist, and a Christian. I can not say that I do now, or ever did, feel that conviction which others speak of feeling; but I feel badly because I can not feel worse than I do.” This was his last letter. He never entered the

Church after the night he joined, till his lifeless remains were carried there for funeral services prior to interment. He was suddenly prostrated with hemorrhage. Another son wrote me, and I hastened home. Brother Hamilton was on the Kingston circuit, and kindly offered to exchange work with me, during this affliction; this was a great accommodation. I could fill his appointments, and be home every night. The attacks of hemorrhage were repeated, till all hopes of saving him from death were at an end. Thus, in the "morning of life," he must be resigned to the fell destroyer. It was hard—but God is good and wise! He lingered till the 22d of May, 1836, when he breathed his last, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." This was in the same room in which, fourteen months before, my eldest son sank sweetly to rest. But they dwell together in the world of light. They were, perhaps, "taken away from the evil to come."

As parents, we could but weep and trust in God. We must learn to *suffer*, as well as *do*, his will. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." We must look for afflictions—but we may, at the same time, look for supporting grace. Thank heaven! we have a loving Savior.

"His heart is made of tenderness,  
His bowels melt with love."

This is a precious truth; and I can say, with a grateful heart, that, as my trials have been, so has



been the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. After the decease of this son, I returned to Marietta, and continued in the work till the close of the year. We were permitted to wind up pleasantly. On my return home, while riding through Logan, my horse stumbled and fell upon his side, fastening my leg beneath him. Some time after, he released me by rising. I arose, and was astonished to find that the limb was not broken. Surely, it was God's providence that preserved me from serious harm. Praise his name!

The field of labor assigned me, in September, 1836, was the Adelphi circuit. My colleague was the Rev. Benjamin Ellis, a good preacher, and a pious, companionable man. We worked sweetly together in the Gospel yoke. Most of this circuit extended over the hills, which were covered with white-oaks and pitch-pine. My health was not very good; by some means, I had become dyspeptic; but I found the invigorating atmosphere, and pure water, of these hills, together with plenty of good corn-bread, to be very efficacious in relieving me from this annoying and distressing disease. Perhaps, however, a share of the credit is due to the picturesque scenery, which, with ever-varying aspect, passed before the eye, in crossing the lofty hills, and passing the deep ravines. No doubt the exhilarating influence arising from frequent contact with the grand and beautiful in nature, is calculated to counteract the nervous depression, which is one of the attendants of deranged digestive organs. But the pleasurable sensations which the

romantic scenery inspired, were greatly enhanced by finding, scattered through the hills and valleys, a goodly number of earnest, self-denying Christians, who were always ready to work for God.

Passing through this circuit, was a stream very appropriately called *Queer creek*. It wound its way through the hills, in such a serpentine course, that, in traveling the distance of two miles, we crossed it not less—and I am not certain but more—than forty times. I used to think it fairly represented the zig-zag life of some specimens of humanity with whom I have had acquaintance. They seem utterly incapable of pursuing a straight-forward course, but exhibit as many windings and turnings as *Queer creek*. They will make a contract with you to-day, and, to-morrow, if they see opportunity of making a little, a very little, too, they will violate it without scruple. They care nothing about their word; and, as for honor, they know nothing of its import. Poor creatures. They are objects of commiseration, when we look at them as immortal beings, led captive by the devil at his will; but much of their crookedness results from downright dishonesty. Having abandoned themselves to absolute selfishness, they become the victims of passion and self-interest, so fully as to be incapable of resisting any gust that may break upon them; the winds and waves drive them hither and thither, so that, like the “double-minded man,” spoken of by St. James, “They are unstable in all their ways”—a poor, *motley* mixture of contrarities—a heap of

jumbled contradictions. God pity them! I lift my heart to Him, in prayer, that they may be rescued, by infinite mercy, from their perilous condition.

In the course of the year, we held a camp meeting, in conjunction with the preachers, on the Logan circuit. The meeting was pretty well attended, the preaching was evangelical, and, of course, profitable; sinners were awakened and converted to God, and the Church was enlivened in faith and holiness. How delightful is the tented grove, with hundreds of happy souls assembling to worship God! and, how much more delightful, when answers of prayer are visible, in the awakening of sinners, who, with broken hearts, cry to Heaven for mercy! but, how transcendently glorious, when the cloud passes away, and the Sun of righteousness pours into their mourning hearts the rays of heavenly light, and they, with countenances beaming with joy, arise, exclaiming, "O Lord, I will praise thee: for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and now thou dost comfort me!" We had peace and quietness in all our borders, and closed up the year with thankfulness to God for his protecting care. Many of the members of this charge still live in the affections of the writer. May the smile of Heaven cheer us all in the close of life!



## CHAPTER XX.

## GRANVILLE CIRCUIT—SUPERANNUATED.

SEPTEMBER, 1837, I was appointed to Granville circuit, with Rev. J. T. Donohoe for my colleague. Brother D. is too well known to require a lengthy notice here. He was in the regular work in the Ohio conference for a long time, then located for several years, and was, last year, readmitted, and placed upon the superannuated list, in order that he may die in connection with the conference which he served so many years. Granville was fifty miles from my residence in Kingston, the circuit was large, and, believing I could not do justice to the work without living upon it, I moved my family to that place. We found a noble board of stewards, but they were unable to procure us a house; they did, however, succeed in renting part of a very poor one. We went at it and raised funds and bought a parsonage. It was good enough, at that time, but, though still used for the purpose, it evidently is some the worse for age. Would that the people could realize how much they would save themselves and ministers, by keeping comfortable accommodations for the families that lead the wearisome life of itinerants!

Granville was settled nearly fifty-one years ago,

by a colony from Granville, Massachusetts. Most of the original settlers were Congregationalists. They were organized into a Church, under the pastoral direction of the venerable Dr. Cooley, who still lives, before leaving for the west. The Congregational Church, in Granville, is, therefore, older than the town itself. The fiftieth anniversary of their arrival on the site of the town, was celebrated by a jubilee, in October, 1855, at which Dr. Cooley was present, and delivered an address. The Congregationalists, having thus preoccupied the ground, have kept the ascendancy ever since. The membership is large, and, under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. Little, this Church occupies a position of influence and high respectability. The Church is Congregational, but the pastor is a Presbyterian, of the New School. It requires no little skill, patience, and perseverance, to keep together so large a membership, composed of such variety of material, under a government so peculiar. But, with very moderate abilities as a preacher, Mr. Little performs this difficult task, thereby displaying unusual capabilities as an administrator. Perhaps the secret of his success is attributable to the great personal influence he has acquired, by his position among his people, most of whom he has known from their youth.

The Baptists commenced operations here at an early day, established a Church, and by making it the seat of their College, were enabled to concentrate an influence which has raised their Church to a

position above that which it occupies in other places in the state. Their Church is large, and their College, though prostrate for some years past, is being resuscitated, with fair prospect of a career of usefulness.

The Episcopalians have a respectable Church, and a literary institution for females; but their influence in the community is not felt a great deal—though some of the best citizens of the place are members of that sect. The Presbyterians, and the Calvinistic Methodists, each have a congregation of worshipers in the Welsh language. Both are rigid Calvinists, and why they do not unite, I am unable to tell.

A note in the stewards' book reads thus: "Methodism was introduced into Granville, Licking county, Ohio, by Rev. James B. Finley, in the year 1810, at which time a class was formed in the house of Mr. William Gavit, one of the early settlers of the place." The place was taken into the Knox circuit, in 1811; James Quinn was presiding elder, and Elisha W. Bowman circuit preacher. Brother Bowman was, therefore, the first preacher who regularly preached in Granville. A long list of worthies have followed him, and preceded the writer, in this field. The list continues: Michael Ellis, David Knox, Samuel West, John Solomon, John M'Mahan, Shadrick Ruark, Henry Baker, etc. I noticed in the list the names of C. Goddard, H. S. Fernandes, L. L. Hamline, and others, which will long live in the affections of the Church. But, occupied as the ground has



been by other denominations which had an earlier start and superior advantages, Methodism has not flourished in Granville, as in many other places; and when the circumstances are fully known, the wonder is not that it has not prospered so well here as elsewhere, but rather that it has lived at all. But with all its disadvantages, Methodism has done a work for God, even here. Hundreds through her instrumentality have been born of the Spirit in this place, many of whom have landed safely in heaven, and some of whom are upon the walls of Zion, while others have emigrated to the far west, leaving a "remnant" who still keep the altar-fires burning, waiting and trusting that God will enlarge the borders of his heritage, and bless his people with abundance of prosperity. God grant unto them the desire of their hearts!

Our first quarterly meeting was held in Granville, and was an excellent meeting, all things considered; near twenty gave us their names as probationers for membership in the Church.

The second was held in Etna—a small village on the National road. The society was in a cold state, and there was little prospect of success; but on Friday night, before the regular commencement of the quarterly meeting services, I delivered a discourse in which the low state of religion was described, and the operations of unbelief in the heart pointed out. I remarked, "You say there will be nothing done at this meeting—that is the language

of unbelief; I do not believe a word of it. I feel assured that God will work at this time." Our faith was quickened, and God did work for us gloriously. Rev. J. Young was our presiding elder. He preached, Saturday, and attended quarterly conference, but was out of health and did not get out at night. The next morning he told me to attend the love-feast, and he thought he would be able to preach at eleven. The hour arrived, and he came and attended the preliminary services, but, after prayer, he turned to me and said, "You will have to preach, I am so hoarse I can not do it." There was no time for premeditation. I announced a text at once, and entered upon its elucidation in the name of Him whose presence is promised. I was graciously assisted. Our meeting increased in interest, power, and glory. The services lasted for several days, and were profitable to the Church, and to many others. On Monday morning, two of the stewards started home, but, like the disciples that journeyed to the village of Emmaus, they talked by the way of all these things, and their hearts warmed as they talked, so that they felt they were doing wrong, and resolved to return. They did so—and, after coming back, they told what had transpired; they had talked over the qualifications pointed out in the book of Discipline, as necessary to be possessed by stewards, concluded they did not possess the deep piety required, and proposed to resign. I dissuaded them from that course, and urged them to seek for more grace.

At our third quarterly meeting, which was held in April, I got wet, took cold, and was, in a short time, disabled from preaching. I returned home, and remember putting my horse in the barn, and the next I had any knowledge of was, finding myself lying in my own bed, very sick. There I lay twelve weeks, at the point of death. For a number of weeks, I could move neither foot nor hand any more than if dead. Many of my friends called in and prayed with me, of which I had no knowledge. The amount of food taken, within the twelve weeks, might have been put in a tea-cup. My life was despaired of by all except my dear wife, without whose skillful nursing and persevering efforts, I must have died. Almost constantly, through those long twelve weeks, was she upon her feet, striving to allay the burning fever, and to minister to the demands of my helpless body. At one time, two physicians said I could not live, and the third said I was already dying; but she would not yield; her trust was in God. To him she looked, by him she was sustained, and, under his blessing, my life was spared. At about the close of the twelve weeks, I was enabled to hold a little conversation with my wife, by whispering in broken sentences, in which we agreed in reference to my burial, etc. I took, as we supposed, my last farewell of my family, and viewed myself as just crossing the cold stream. I realized no ecstatic joy, neither had I any dread or fear. I seemed to be moving calmly out upon the dark waters, till the impression became vivid in my



mind that I was half over the swellings of Jordan; then looking before me, all was light and glorious; I gazed, as I supposed, upon the trees of paradise, waving their immortal branches in the winds of heaven, and beckoning me to the shore. I fully expected to rest, in a few moments, upon the plains of light, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the redeemed from earth; with my children and friends who had died in the Lord; and, above all, with my blessed Savior. This was not delirium; my mind was clear, and my consciousness distinct; but I can scarcely say whether I was more in the body than out of the body. It was a blessed night, which I shall never forget. The next morning, I was pronounced better. Though the improvement was almost imperceptible, I continued to grow better; and, at our last quarterly meeting, some of the friends lifted me into a carriage, and took me to it. I appeared to many as one risen from the dead. Some had heard that I was dead, and none expected me to recover. All greeted me with much tenderness and affection, declaring it a privilege to meet me again in the sanctuary, which they had not expected on earth. It was a solemn, weeping, glorious time, but my pen can never describe the happiness of that hour. Uninspired language can not express the gratitude of my heart, in reviewing the past mercies of my heavenly Father. "Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them forever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass. Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire and hail; snow and vapor: stormy wind fulfilling his word: mountains, and all hills: fruitful trees, and all cedars: beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl: kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men and maidens; old men and children: let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven. He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the Lord!"

When the conference for this year—1838—sat in Columbus, I was able to reach there; but my limbs were swollen, and I was yet so debilitated as to be unable to put on and off my clothing without assistance. Of course, I was not able to take work, but took a superannuated relation to the conference, and returned home and spent the winter. In April, 1839, four appointments were set off from Circleville, and, in pursuance of the desire of the membership, the presiding elder prevailed with me to take charge of them. My old friends made me welcome among them, and we had some most delightful meetings.

In the month of May, a brother of mine came, with his family, and settled close by me. We had been separated thirteen years. He is the only relative of mine that ever settled in Ohio. Soon after his arrival, he and brother R. Green commenced a series of meetings a few miles from Johnstown, which they continued till God blessed them with a glorious revival of religion. Many souls, through their instrumentality, were happily converted to God, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church; and a large portion of them still hold on their way. Praise God for converting power! This brother was very dear to me. While I was stationed on Lake Champlain, he made me a visit, and God made me instrumental in his awakening and conversion. He still lives near by me. We often visit each other, and talk of the deep things that pertain to the kingdom of God. Here we meet and part; but, if faithful a few more days, we shall meet where parting is not known.

“When all our toils are o’er,  
Our sufferings and our pain;  
Who meet on that eternal shore,  
Shall never part again.”



## CHAPTER XXI.

## LITHOPOLIS AND HEBRON CIRCUITS.

AT the conference of 1839, some appointments taken from Worthington circuit were added to those of which I had charge the latter part of the previous year, forming Lithopolis circuit. Upon this work I was sent, in connection with brother Jacob Young, who had just completed his term as presiding elder of the district. We labored together in love, and were blessed with some good times. During this year, we raised a "centenary subscription" for the purpose of building a parsonage in Groveport, a small village on the canal, ten miles from Columbus, which subsequently became the head-quarters of the circuit.

This charge contained some excellent, old-fashioned Methodists. I have before spoken of the Hopewell appointment in Grooms's neighborhood, which was now connected with Lithopolis; in the latter place were some whose names I cherish with pleasure, as also in Groveport. This last place was originally called Rarysport, from the fact that it was laid out by W. Rary, who did considerable business in the produce line; it was also known by the name of Wert's Grove—a Mr. Wert owning part of the

land on which it was built. When the village came to be incorporated, some strife arose as to the name it should bear, both proprietors, with their respective friends, contending for the honor. The controversy was settled by a "compromise;" the names of both the men were left off, while the "Grove" and the "Port" were united, making the very appropriate name — Groveport. For many years Methodism flourished well in this place. Men of sterling worth lived here, some of whom will long be remembered by the preachers whose lot it has been to spend a year or two on this work. One fact may be named, of some significance. It has several times happened that the presiding elders on the district, who were well acquainted with the work, and whose position gave them some advantages in the way of selecting their own fields, have closed their term of service in that relation, and then taken this circuit. I love to think of the old soldiers of the cross—but many of them have removed to the Church triumphant, while their children occupy their places in the army still in the field.

We held a camp meeting, that year. The site selected for the purpose was a beautiful grove offered by old brother Needles, between Pickerington and Columbus. This was in one of the finest farming sections in Ohio, and surrounded by a neighborhood of moral, enterprising, industrious, and, of course, prosperous citizens. On the day appointed for preparing the grounds, there was a general

turnout. Quite a number of noble-hearted men who made no profession, came and took hold manfully; we took this as a good omen. The best of order prevailed throughout the meeting. I do not recollect of having occasion to administer reproof but once the whole time of the encampment. Everything moved on delightfully till the last day—"the great day of the festival." Then the "doors of the Church" were opened—that is, they were announced as open; for, like the "happy gates of Gospel grace," they stand "open night and day"—persons were invited to join the Church on probation; they came one after another till about fifty names were enrolled as new recruits. Many were converted to God, became useful members of the Church, and still live to honor their profession; some of them holding official stations, are now standing in the fore front in the battle with sin and error. Some will read this sketch and say from the heart, "Thank God for that meeting! that was the time I started for heaven." God bless them! May they one and all obtain the crown of life!

In 1840, our conference sat in Zanesville. Bishop Hedding presided with his usual dignity and urbanity of manners—a perfect specimen of the refined Christian gentleman. He permitted each member, who wished, to speak on every question that came up, and yet the business was done up with unusual dispatch. The year 1840 will be remembered as the time of the most excited political campaign our



country has ever known. The business of conference was hurried to a close to give the members opportunity to reach home in time to vote for the man of their choice. I do not mean that the conference, *as such*, hurried business for this purpose; but the members doubtless refrained from consuming time with long speeches, and from introducing matters of an extraneous character, in order that the session might not be unnecessarily prolonged. Preachers are men, and citizens, and *as citizens*, if not *as preachers*, they have equal rights and privileges, politically, with their fellow-citizens; and, though prudence would always dictate that they should not become entangled with the partyisms that prevail, so as to hinder their usefulness as ministers, they ought not to yield to the bullying cry of political demagogues, and be driven from the exercise of their rights, simply because they are called to minister in holy things. They must not only "render unto God the things that are God's," but they are equally bound to "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's;" and in performing this latter duty conscientiously, they will find it necessary to give the weight of their influence in favor of that form of civil government which, to them, appears best calculated to promote the interests and happiness of the people. In a country where the people are the sovereigns, no man can innocently stand aloof, and allow the elections to go by *default*, so as to raise to offices of trust and power corrupt,

time-serving politicians, when by attending to his privilege and duty he can contribute to hinder such unworthy elevations, and promote the election of men at least a little better fitted for the responsible positions. The right of suffrage, secured to us by the organic law of the state and nation, is no less a right than a duty; as good citizens, we can neither refuse to vote, nor vote carelessly, under the influence of mere party bias; we owe it to ourselves, to the country, and to posterity, to vote, and to vote understandingly, with an eye single to the best interests of the whole country. Viewing the matter thus, we can not find fault even with a body of Christian ministers for being anxious to perform this duty of citizenship, at a time when grave interests were pending; nor can we envy the wisdom or patriotism of those partisan tricksters who are forever harping about the importance of keeping politics and religion separate. The fact is, politics have been separated too far from religion; men are coming to think it possible to be, at the same time, religious saints, and political knaves; and, on the other hand, some are looked upon, through party prejudices, as being perfect paragons of political purity, while they are known to be morally and religiously corrupt. Such things ought not to be.

But we hope to see no more such contests for the Presidency. The influence of the political excitement of 1840, was detrimental to religion. Many pious members of the Church, in different places,

were led away by the intoxication of the times, and "made shipwreck of faith, and a good conscience;" while the minds of the irreligious were too much dissipated to be reached with the serious truths of the Gospel. Although it is to be hoped that party politics will never again rage as in that year, while I write these lines, deprecating the irreligious tendency of such excitements, there is reason to apprehend a return of similar scenes, during the election campaign which is now begun. I pray God to save his Church and people from corruption and apostasy!

At this conference some appointments were taken from Granville, and some from the Rushville circuit, and the Hebron circuit organized, and I was appointed to labor on it. The arrangement suited me well; for, having purchased a snug little farm near Johnstown, and located my family upon it, this work was convenient to my residence. My health was not very good, and as very many of my old friends lived in the bounds of this new charge, I considered myself well favored in receiving this appointment. There were some whole-souled Methodists here of the original type. I found them ready to co-operate in the good work, willing to bear the cross and make the sacrifices necessary to advance the cause of religion. My mind reverts to the different preaching-places, and before it rises the image of familiar faces, some of whom shall no more be seen in this world. Of many I would like to speak freely, but must not indulge. There were



the Pitzers, Brights, Coulters, Siglers, Hulls, Wilsons—but the list extends, suggesting names loved and honored as disciples of our blessed Lord; yet I must not omit the name of that venerable servant and minister of Jesus Christ, Rev. MARTIN FATE. For many long years, when the country was new, and Methodism, not being understood, was despised, he as a faithful sentinel stood upon the walls of Zion, watching for souls as one who should give an account; and God made him instrumental in comforting the bereaved, in directing the inquiring penitent to the cross, and in convincing the gainsayers of the truth and beauty of our holy religion. His walk and conversation accorded with the Gospel of Christ, and his example of unobtrusive piety exhibited the spirit of meekness, faith, and charity, sending out an influence more potent for good than can be exerted by scores of impetuous, time-serving professors. He lived to see his children “walking by the same rule, and minding the same things;” and, enjoying a “green old age,” he lingers in happy expectancy of a blessed immortality. “May his sun go down in smiles, and bring a pleasing night!”

In Brownsville we had a small brick chapel, since used by brother J. Fluke as a wagon-shop; but the commodious church in which the congregation now worship was then building, and it was completed and dedicated that year—Rev. Samuel Hamilton preaching the dedicatory sermon. The friends in Linnville built a good church the year previous; in Hebron

we had no house, but went to work and secured funds for building one, which was afterward done; and it has been the chief ornament of the place since its completion. There, too, was George's Chapel—a large brick church, one and a half miles from Hebron, with a good society and congregation—but now, owing to changes in the community, the membership are scattered, and the “old brick” is gone—as these old tabernacles which we inhabit will soon be gone—taken down and applied to some other use. The year passed away pleasantly, and I left the circuit thankful to God for inclining the hearts of this people to bear with my infirmities, and to sympathize with me in my afflictions and toils. Thus closed the third year after the severe sickness which brought me to the grave's mouth.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## GLANCE AT SEVERAL YEARS—CONCLUSION.

IN 1841, I was on the Granville circuit in company with Rev. W. T. Hand and J. A. Bruner—two efficient and agreeable companions in labor. My family lived in the bounds of this work, and, having previously traveled the circuit, I was well acquainted with the people, and felt myself at home among them. Rev. R. O. Spencer was presiding elder. He was a good theologian, a faithful, affectionate preacher, and a warm-hearted Christian. He filled the office with dignity and usefulness—but he is still in the good work, and I will indulge in no further remarks in reference to him, in this place. We all united, heart and hand in the “labor of love,” and were soon permitted to see that our “labor was not vain in the Lord.” The Spirit of God fell upon the people, quickening believers and convicting sinners, causing the powers of darkness to tremble. Penitent souls were led to cry out, “What must we do to be saved?” We stood ready to point them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and witnessed the conversion of a large number.

My son, C. W. Lewis, lived about two miles from Johnstown, where he and the neighbors erected a



log meeting-house, in which, when it was finished, we held a protracted meeting, and, through the divine mercy, we had a glorious time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Many were awakened and converted, and taking these with some members who lived in the vicinity, we organized a large society. My brother, of whom I have spoken, and this son, who had been preaching for some time, rendered us efficient aid during this meeting.

At another place, brother Bruner and myself held a protracted meeting in a log-house, which, all things considered, excelled any thing of the kind I ever witnessed. We took in about ninety members, some of whom, alas! have "fallen away;" but others remain steadfast, and are now living members in the Church. In the spring, brother Hand and myself held a protracted meeting in the town of Granville, which was an excellent meeting, the fruit of which yet remains. Here, a young lady, reared by Major Warren, sought and obtained peace in Christ, and the day following her conversion, I visited the Major and family. The young lady, in answer to a question, said she was still happy. I conversed with the Major, and learned from him, that he thought it right and proper to have meetings on the Sabbath, but saw no propriety in having services through the week. I urged him to attend, but he would not promise. I had prayer and left, not much expecting to see him again, while the meeting lasted; but he was in the congregation that night. The next day he came again, and, when

mourners were invited to the altar, he arose deliberately, and came forward. While upon his knees, he requested us to take his name as a probationer, which we did, and he was shortly afterward enabled to embrace the Savior by faith, and has continued in the narrow way till the present time. In November—1855—he was smitten down with a stroke of palsy, and remains in a very feeble condition, with little prospect of restoration of bodily health, but enjoys a cheering hope of immortality and eternal life, which is as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, sustaining his spirits, and affording him holy comforts, under the trying providences through which he is called to pass.

We had other special meetings on the circuit, which were attended with good success; but I must not particularize; the year closed happily. I look back upon it with pleasure, and know not that I can express my feelings in regard to it better than by repeating the well-known doxology—

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise him, all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

In 1842, I was appointed to the Blendon circuit, without a colleague. The Rev. Nathan Emory was then living on the circuit, sustaining a superannuated relation to the conference; but, being able to do some work, he was employed to fill the vacancy. He was formerly a member of the New York conference—was

a man of noble, generous impulses—a good theologian, and delighted to point out, to inquiring hearers, the way of life and salvation, through the blessed Redeemer. In the days of his strength, he filled some important stations in the Church, and always acquitted himself well. He lived to a good old age, and died, a few years ago, in clear prospect of heaven. We labored together in harmony, and with some success. It was not a year of extensive revival influence, though we were favored with reasonable prosperity. The high school was then flourishing at Westerville, under the direction of brothers Kingsley and Blair. Brothers Ingals, Westervelt, and Lonnis, were there in course of preparation for the ministry. The Institution has passed into the hands of the United Brethren, and, under the patronage of that denomination, it is enjoying a fair degree of prosperity as the Otterbein University. At our last quarterly meeting conference, the three young brethren named were recommended for the traveling connection, and, at the next session of the Ohio conference, they were admitted on trial. Brother Ingals is now a member of the Iowa conference; brother Westervelt died in the work, several years ago; and brother Lonnis is still a member of the Ohio conference.

It was that year that the great Millerite excitement swept over the country. It became, for a time, the main topic of conversation in many places—some were alarmed—some became serious—some went crazy, and others treated the whole matter with



indifference. It was a fearful delusion, the effects of which have not yet terminated. In many places, that year, large numbers flocked into the Churches, whose minds were probably brought to bear on the subject of religion, under the influence of that excitement; and, it is altogether likely, that some, by that means, became good Christians—nevertheless, the evils attending the propagation of Millerism, were apparent to all candid observers. It was a grand deception; yet, perchance, the good Being made it the occasion of the awakening of some who were really converted. He can overrule evil so as to bring good out of it, without sanctifying the evil. On the other hand, it may not be contrary to his plan of providence to permit such delusions to prevail as a scourge to the Churches for their indifference to the true objects of their holy mission. At all events, the prevalence of such heresies should serve as warnings to Christians, of every name, never to relax their efforts for the maintenance of sound doctrines and pure morality.

Here, as in all other places where I have traveled, there were some members whose light, like the city upon the hill, could not be hid. Such are, indeed, the “salt of the earth.” Praise God, religion is the same every-where! It enlightens the eyes, makes wise the simple, rejoices the heart, and, in a word, it exalts man to his proper dignity, fits him for living and for dying, and qualifies him to live forever with the holy and the happy in heaven. Having finished the work, made new class-books, etc., I started to

conference, praying God to pardon all he had seen amiss in preachers or people, and to direct in the appointments for the coming year.

In 1843, at the session of conference held in Chillicothe, there were some appointments taken from the Granville charge, and formed into a separate two-weeks' circuit, called Johnstown circuit. Here I was appointed to labor. This was home work. Having traveled over the ground two years, while it was connected with Granville, I was well acquainted with the people. No time was lost from moving, or other causes, but I entered at once upon the work of visiting from house to house, talking and praying with the families, and preaching nearly every day in the week. I probably prepared more new pulpit subjects, this year, than any one year of my life. I had preached a great many times to this people, and felt anxious to feed them with food convenient for them—some with “milk,” and some with “strong meat,” that they might grow thereby. We had no special revival, yet the people lived in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace. Love and harmony prevailed through all our borders. It was a year of real profit to myself. In applying my mind to books, in studying the holy Bible, seeking to bring forth from that storehouse of knowledge things new and old, I found great delight. Some incidents occurred worthy of record, but space will not permit me to dwell.

In 1844, I was appointed to Irville circuit, in connection with Rev. Samuel Hamilton. We labored

together as brethren, in love and harmony, had some good times, but no special revival; the circuit was large, and the work was pretty heavy. In 1845, I went to the Hebron circuit with brother P. A. Mutchner, who has long since departed this life, in full prospect of the heavenly glory. This was a year of some prosperity. In 1846, I was returned with Rev. Wesley Webster, now of the Cincinnati conference, a worthy, faithful preacher, and a most amiable colleague. We had some revivals during the year, and closed up, thankful to God for comforting and sustaining grace. This was a warm-hearted people, who exerted themselves to meet their obligations to the Church and ministry with promptness and fidelity.

In 1847, the Thornville circuit was my field of labor, and Rev. Benjamin Ellis my colleague. The year passed away pleasantly, closing with a camp meeting, which was held four miles from Rushville, and resulted in forty accessions to the Church, most of whom found redemption, in the blood of Christ. This was a glorious meeting. The numbers present on Sabbath were estimated, by good judges, at fifteen thousand. Rev. J. M. Jameson was presiding elder. He filled the office well, and met the responsibilities of this occasion to admiration. He still lives to do battle in the Lord's army—an affable man, and an able minister of the New Testament.

In 1848, I traveled the Granville circuit, with Rev. C. C. Lybrand. My appointment, this year, was to Irville, and Rev. James Gilruth was appointed to



Granville; but it was ascertained, after conference closed, that brother G. had only been absent from that circuit three years, and could not constitutionally travel it this year. So a change was effected, he going to Irville and I to Granville. In 1849, my name was attached to Hebron circuit, as supernumerary. The next year I traveled Baltimore circuit with Rev. A. B. See, a warm-hearted brother, a good preacher, and a pleasant enough colleague for any man. In 1851, with Rev. Archibald Fleming, I went upon the Pickerington circuit. Brother F. was, like most of those of whom I have had occasion to speak, a lovely man of God. I was returned, the next year, with brother Richard Pitzer. We had a very prosperous year. Brother P. is a zealous, faithful laborer. He follows the direction of Solomon, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Pickerington is one of the best little circuits in the conference.

In 1853, I was appointed to the Groveport circuit, with brother S. M. Merrill, my last colleague; and this was my last circuit. The connection of brother M. with the preparation of this volume, precludes remarks. Before this year closed, my health failed, and I was compelled to retire from the field. Thank God! that, upon retiring, I could say, of a truth, that I never retreated from the hottest of the battle! In my humble way, I ever sought to advance the cause of truth and piety; and now, in reviewing the past, my conscience bears me witness that my motives have

been pure; and it is a source of great satisfaction to me to be able to *say* and *feel* that my endeavors have not been altogether unavailing.

In September, 1854, I received a superannuated relation to the conference, and from that time to this, August, 1856, I have only been able to preach an occasional sermon. At times, it has been difficult for me to pray in my family; at other times, my voice has been better, so that I could preach with such apparent ease that the hearers would not suspect the labor caused me any pain. For the greater part of the time, I have enjoyed uninterrupted communion with my heavenly Father, and felt a comforting assurance that, if my earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. How good the Lord is!

I used to imagine that, if I should live to be superannuated, I would become a lugubrious old man, and feel like retiring from society, and shutting myself up in some unfrequented place, to linger out the "evil days" in hermit loneliness. Thank God! such is not the case. Never in my life did I enjoy the society of friends better than now. To go out and mingle with those whose kind words and friendly voices cheered me in the days of my toil, is to me like living life over again. This I am sometimes permitted to do; and I find the same warm hearts and open hands ready to greet me, and the same willingness to hear what words I can yet utter in honor of

the name of my precious Savior. Praise God for friends and friendship!

And now let me glance over the past. The providence of God hath led me in a way that I knew not. Reared in the Baptist Church to the years of manhood, without any particular inclination to public life, and with only such advantages for education as the common schools afford, the idea could not possibly have entered my mind, when setting out in life, that I should ever become a Methodist preacher; but so it is. More than forty years of my life have been spent in this work. My pathway has been checkered; the "lights and shades" of itinerancy have alternated in my experience; but, in reviewing the past, I must say, that "goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life." Some of the dispensations of Providence have been not only mysterious, but sorely afflictive; yet, in the hour of darkness, when earthly comforts fled, and lowering clouds overspread my spiritual sky, I trusted in the Lord, "endured as seeing the invisible," and, through his abounding grace, my soul found refuge and safety. In Clinton county, in the state of New York, on the shore of Lake Champlain, we consigned to the grave the mortal remains of two lovely babes. In Washington county, of the same state, stands a stone sacred to the memory of Betsey, the daughter, of whose death I have already spoken. In Albany county, sleeps the dust of another tender babe. In Ross county, Ohio, lie the two sons whose deaths were mentioned. And



in Sangamon county, Illinois, the body of my son, Calvin Wesley, rests in hope. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord!" All of these which had come to years, died triumphantly. Sleep on, dear children! Rest in peace till the angel of God shall sound the trumpet, when the dead shall rise incorruptible! Then shall ye come forth, glorious and immortal, with the triumphant shout, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Most of my family have preceded me to that land which is very far off, where the inhabitants never say they are sick, where all darkness is excluded, where light, pure, unsullied and uninterrupted, reigns forever. There is the absence of all pain, and the presence of all ease—the absence of mortality with its concomitant ills, and the presence of immortality with all its attendant blessings. Blessed world! we may not, while in the flesh, conceive of its unrevealed glories, but, happy for us if, with St. John, we can say, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." This is enough! "We shall be like him;" like the spiritual, immortal, glorified body of Jesus Christ! O what stupendous grace! What boundless love! Let us fall at the

feet of Jesus, and adore the God and Rock of our salvation, who hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel! Most of my seniors have passed on before me, and many of my juniors have departed this life, while I remain, much like the solitary tree in the open field, exposed to the sweeping blasts of this stormy world; but, unworthy though I be, God is my refuge and defense, my shield and buckler, my high tower and my salvation. His loving-kindness is better than life, and my lips shall praise him.

Now that my days of active service in the Church are past, I may be permitted to speak plainly on a point of some importance, and yet of such delicacy that, under other circumstances, I could not dwell upon it without exposing myself to suspicions of selfishness. I refer to the support of preachers. If the Disciplinary allowance had been the same that it is now from the commencement of my itinerant life, and if my receipts had been the same under that provision that they actually have been, the aggregate of my deficiencies would have amounted to about four thousand dollars. The fact that the allowance in former years was less than now, decreases this deficiency somewhat, but the statement illustrates the results of that policy which allows the laborers to go off from their charges year after year, without receiving their full claims. They are sometimes compelled to retire, after many years of toil, without any means of support, when the aggre-

gate of the *little mites not received* from their various charges, would be sufficient to render them comfortable, and smooth their pathway to the tomb, crowning the evening of their lives with tranquil joy.

I write not for myself—through the blessing of a kind Providence, my own wants are not so urgent as are the wants of others—but I can sympathize with the worn-out and needy, as men in the prime of life can not; and, in behalf of all those who have spent their physical and mental energies in the glorious work of the Christian ministry, I appeal to the liberality, the conscience, the piety, the magnanimity of the Church! Brethren, let the claims of these be considered; think upon them for good; remember them in prayers and offerings; make their hearts glad with your munificence, and the blessings of old men, with the benedictions of their God will rest upon you. And now, dear reader, I close. I bid you adieu till we shall meet in the better world. But in taking my leave of you, I invoke the divine blessing upon us all, during our remaining days, in the language of the poet:

“May the grace of Christ our Savior,  
And the Father’s boundless love,  
With the Holy Spirit’s favor  
Rest upon us from above :  
Thus may we abide in union  
With each other and the Lord,  
And possess, in sweet communion,  
Joys which earth can not afford !”







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